I AM... IRON MAN

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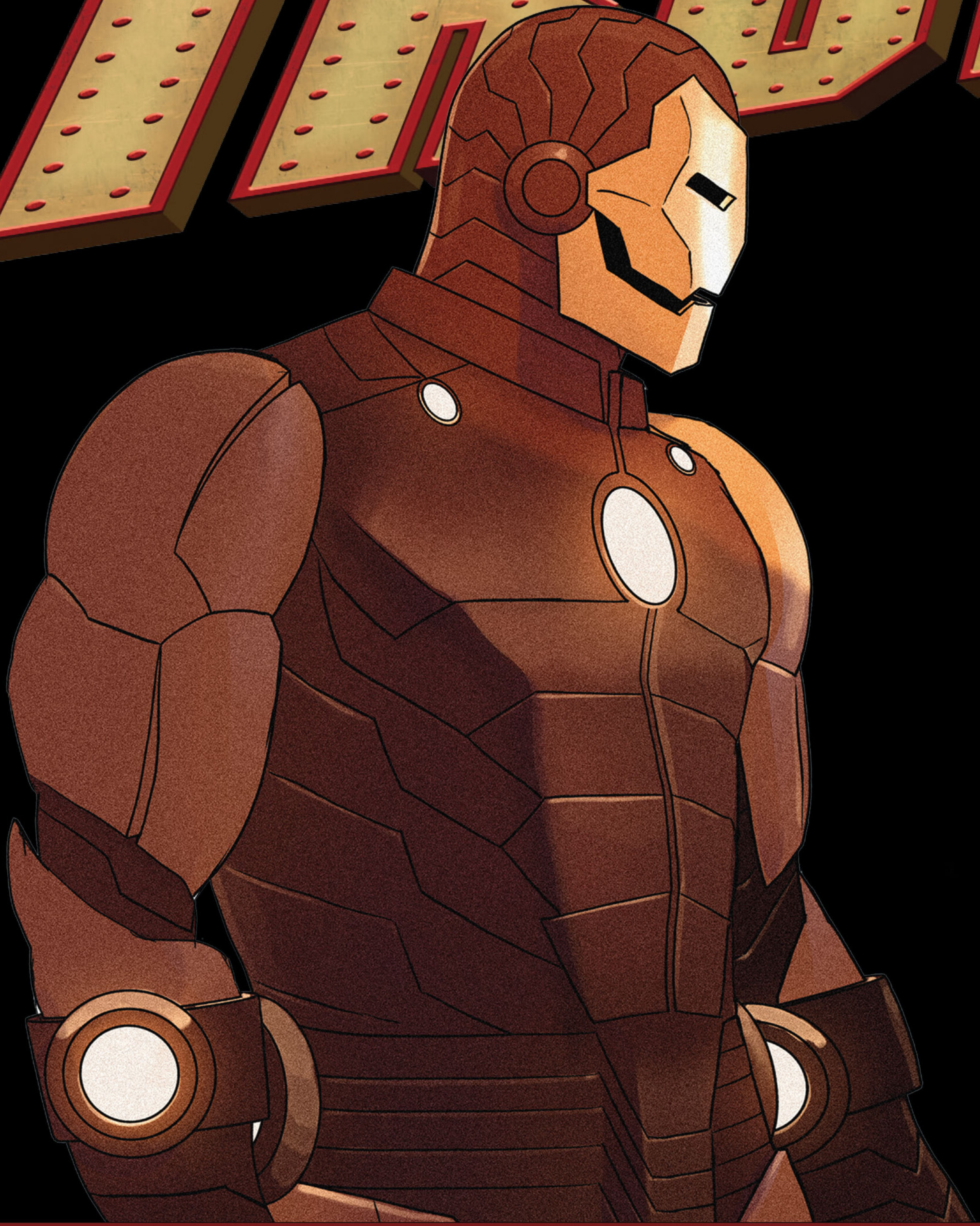
I AM...
IRON MAN

TONY STARK IS KNOWN AS MANY THINGS: BILLIONAIRE PLAYBOY, GENIUS INVENTOR, FUTURIST, HERO, HUMAN. BUT WHEN HE DONS HIS HIGH-TECH ARMOR, HE BECOMES THE MIGHTY AVENGER KNOWN AS IRON MAN. WATCH HIM ANNOUNCE THIS TRUTH. WATCH HIM DECLARE…

I AM… IRON MAN



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IRON MAN
25

DAY ONE.
DAY TWO.
CHARGING.
HYDRATING.
SALINE SOLUTION...
...ADMINISTERED THROUGH INTRAVENOUS THERAPY.
DAY THREE.
PILOT WAKING.
WELCOME...

...IRON MAN.

WHERE--?
$#&%!
THRUSTERS OFFLINE.
SUIT INTEGRITY... SIXTY PERCENT.
COMMS.
COMMUNICATION DEVICES OFFLINE.
QPS.
QUANTUM POSITIONING SYSTEM... ONLINE.
IS HE HERE?
YES.
THE PERSON OF INTEREST CAN BE LOCATED IN...

JOTUNHEIM

HOME OF THE GIANTS

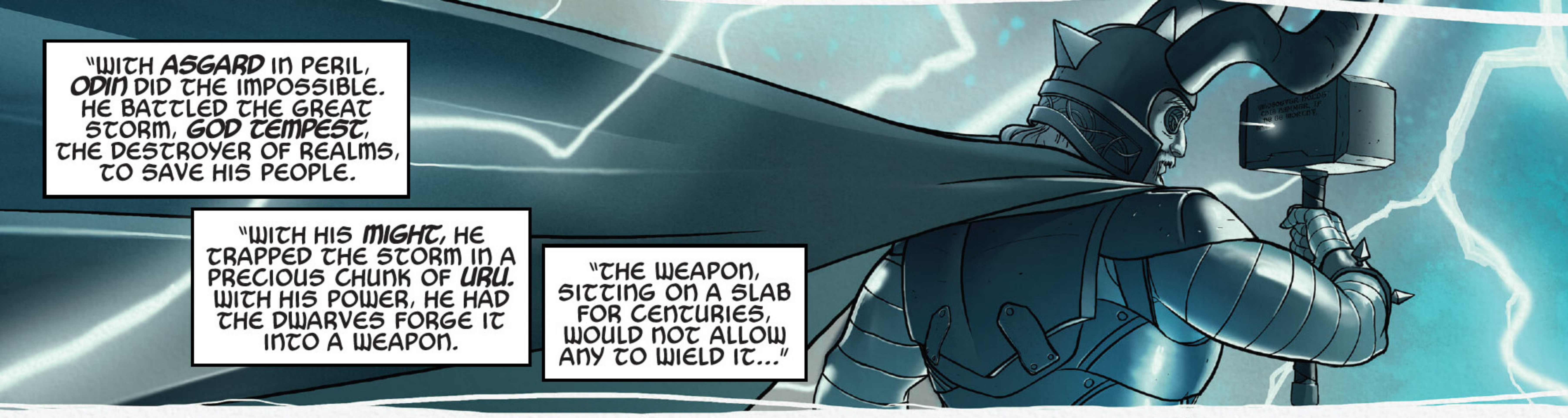
TARGET
-156° F
TARGET IN DISTRESS.
-157° F
04 - 05:34
DAYS -
-157° F
04 - 05:34:21 LEFT
DAYS - HH:MM:SS

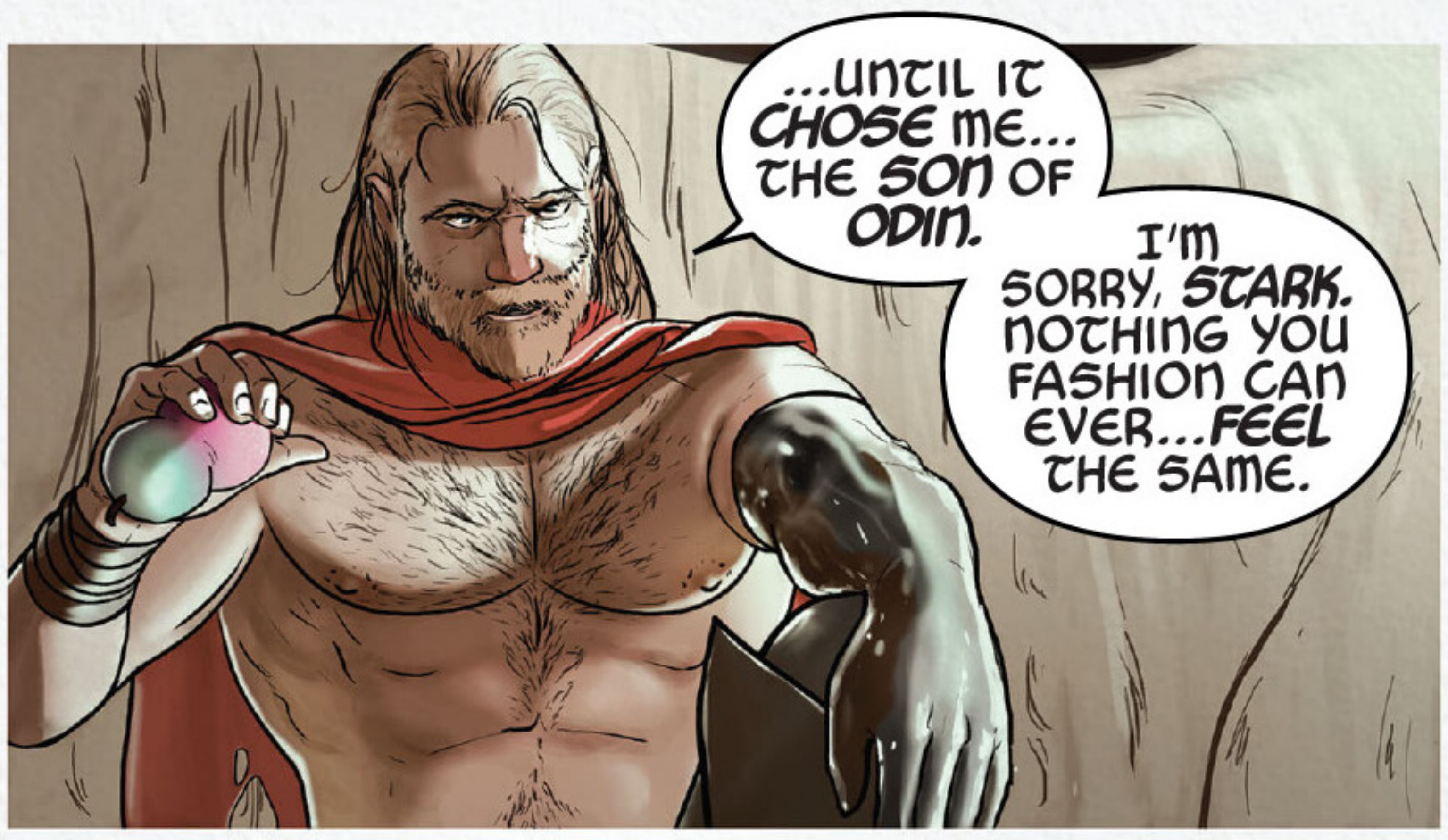
FOUR DAYS LEFT.
ARE YOU STILL THERE, B.R.I.A.N.?
I'M YOUR SUIT'S A.I., MISTER STARK. I'M NOT SURE I CAN LEAVE EVEN IF I WANTED TO.
...THE RICK DECKARD PROTOCOL.
HEY, B.R.I.A.N....
THREE DAYS LEFT.
...HAVE I EVER TOLD YOU ABOUT THE TIME THE HULK LEAPED INTO THE AIR AND I COULD SWEAR HE DIDN'T USE HIS LEGS?
I WAS IN SHOCK FROM THE SONIC BOOM.
HE HAD REACHED MACH ONE IN AN INSTANT.
TWO DAYS LEFT.
...BUT THEN HE TURNED, HE LOOKED AT ME AND HE SMILED. HULK NEVER SMILES. BUT THAT $#&% SMILED AT ME.
THAT'S WHEN THE SMELL HIT ME. GAMMA FART.
MY LUNGS FEEL MUCH WORSE THAN THEY DID THEN.
I'M AFRAID THAT'S THE FIFTEENTH TIME YOU HAVE TOLD THIS STORY, MISTER STARK. BRAIN ACTIVITY SUGGESTS YOU MIGHT BE DELIRIOUS.
I WOULD ADVISE THAT YOU FIND SOME SHELTER, FOOD AND REST.
YOU THINK JOTUNHEIM HAS GOOD CREPES? DAD USED TO--
GAH!
NOT BEYOND THERE!

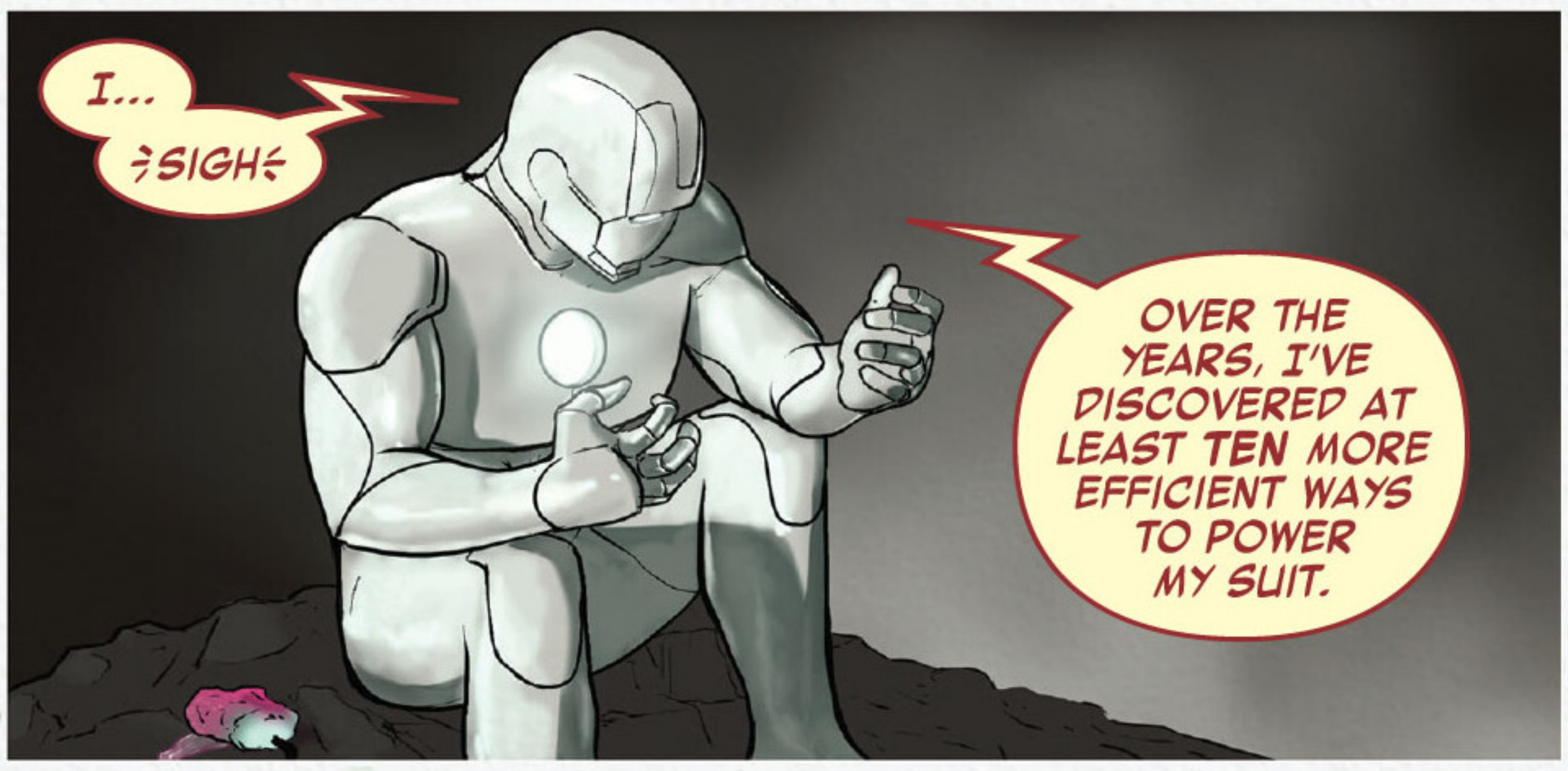
HEY! TRYNA RIP MY ARM OUT, BIG GUY?
NO GOD SHALL PASS BEYOND THE FROZEN LAKE OF TEARS.
THIS IS THE SACRED LAND OF THE FROST GIANTS.
ABOUT THAT... ...I'M NOT A GOD.
NO GOD SHALL PASS.
SURE. YOU KEEP SAYING THAT.
NO GOD SHALL PASS.
SUIT INTEGRITY--
SCAN THE STATUE... ...FAST!
IS IT ALIVE?!
SCANNING.
OBJECT DOES NOT SATISFY THE PREDEFINED STATUS "ALIVE."
GOOD.
POWER CRITICALLY LOW.
SORRY, BUDDY. WOULD LOVE THE TITLE, BUT I AM NOT A GOD.
I AM IRON MAN.

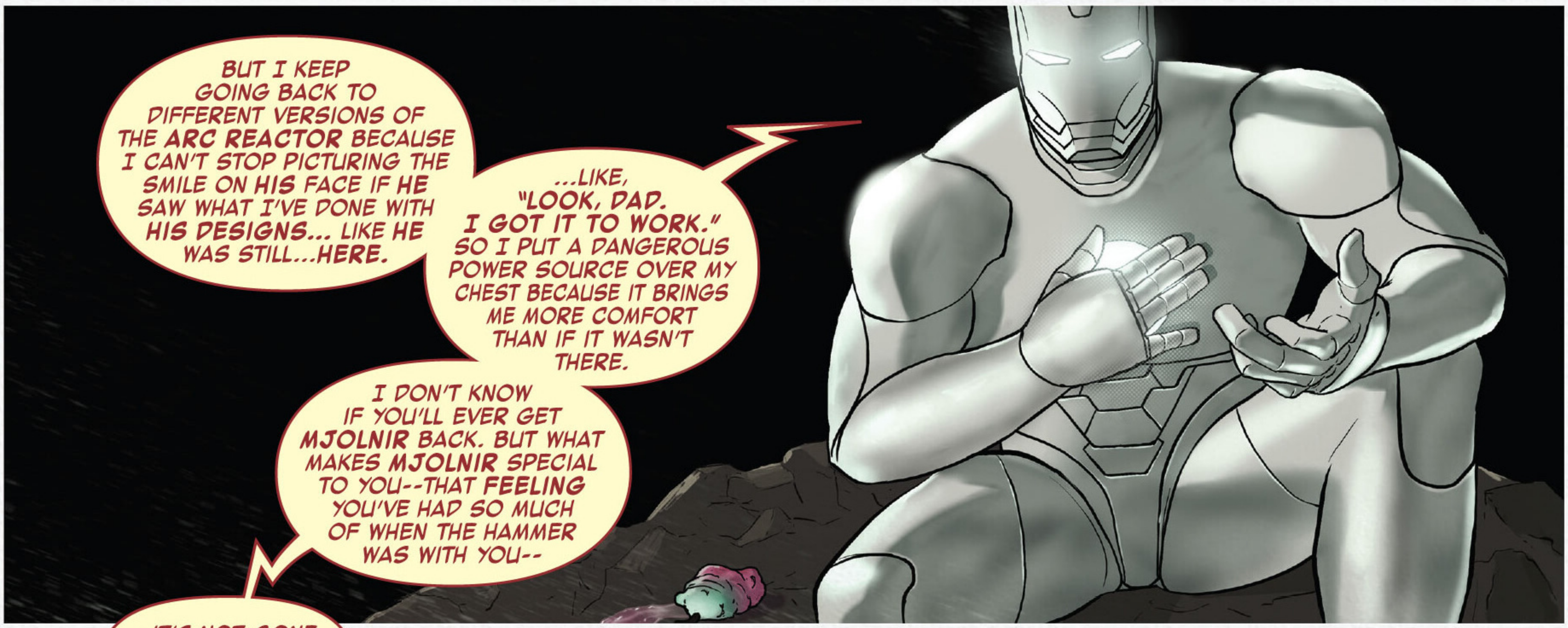
ZERO DAYS LEFT.
INHALE
ARMOR IS FULLY CHARGED, MISTER STARK.
EXHALE
WE CAN, AS YOU SAY, "KICK SOME #$%" NOW.
LET'S GO SAVE AN AVENGER.
HHRGH!
WOE UNTO YO--
OH. GREETINGS, THOR ODINSON.
NAY! THOR IS AWESOME.
I THOUGHT "NO GOD SHALL PASS."
LOOK AT HIM-- BARE CHESTED IN THE FREEZING COLD OF JOTUNHEIM.
UM, I THINK THE STATUE MAY HAVE BEEN ENCHANTED WITH A CRUSH ON YOU, THOR.

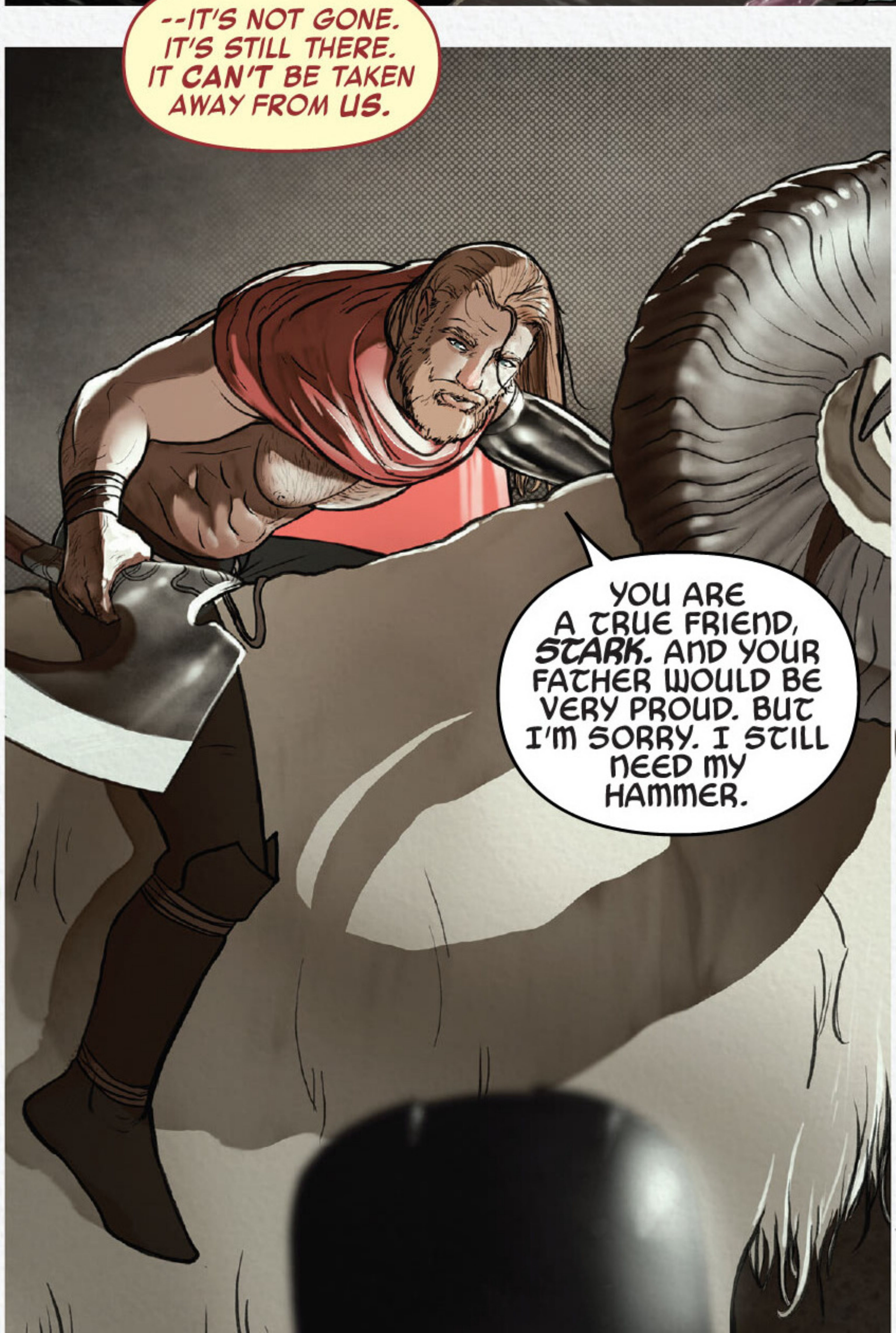
LOKI?
AYE.
I DID NOT SEND ANY.
SO, I GOT A DISTRESS SIGNAL FROM YOU. WHAT'S UP?
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?
THIS IS USUALLY THE POINT WHEN A VILLAIN CREEPS OUT OF THE SHADOWS AND SAYS, "THOR DID NOT SEND THE DISTRESS SIGNAL. I DID. NOW I HAVE YOU BOTH IN MY TRAP OF VILLAINOUS CONCOCTION."
SO, YEAH, JUST CHECKING.
ANYHOO, I'VE GOT IMPLANTS IN MOST AVENGERS. YEAH, YEAH, ETHICS. I KNOW. YOU'RE WELCOME.
IF ANYONE'S SUGAR LEVELS, BRAIN ACTIVITY OR BLOOD PRESSURE GOES BEYOND A PREDEFINED RANGE, IT SENDS A DISTRESS SIGNAL.
YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TO MIDGARD IN A WHILE, AND...YOU HAVEN'T DRUNK MEAD IN EXACTLY ONE MONTH TODAY.
THAT'S ONLY POSSIBLE IF YOU'RE DEAD OR IN CAPTIVITY. I'VE SEEN FISH DRINK LESS. HENCE, MY PRESENCE HERE TO... FACE OFF WITH WHOMEVER MIGHT HAVE HELD THOR CAPTIVE.
'TIS ODINSON NOW. ANOTHER BEARS THE NAME THOR.
CATCH. IT DOES NOT FREEZE IN THE COLD.
OH. THE WHOLE MJOLNIR THING.
YOU KNOW I CAN MAKE YOU ANOTHER HAMMER, RIGHT?
WE MIGHT HAVE TO MELT WOLVERINE DOWN TO GET HIS ADAMANTIUM, BUT WITH "BORROWED" WAKANDAN VIBRANIUM AND SOME OF THE CRAZY STUFF REED HAS IN HIS LAB THAT HE DOESN'T KNOW I KNOW ABOUT...
...I'LL HAVE YOU SOARING THROUGH THE COSMOS AGAIN AND SMITING EVIL IN THE FACE WITH LIGHTNING.
WELL, ELECTRICITY.

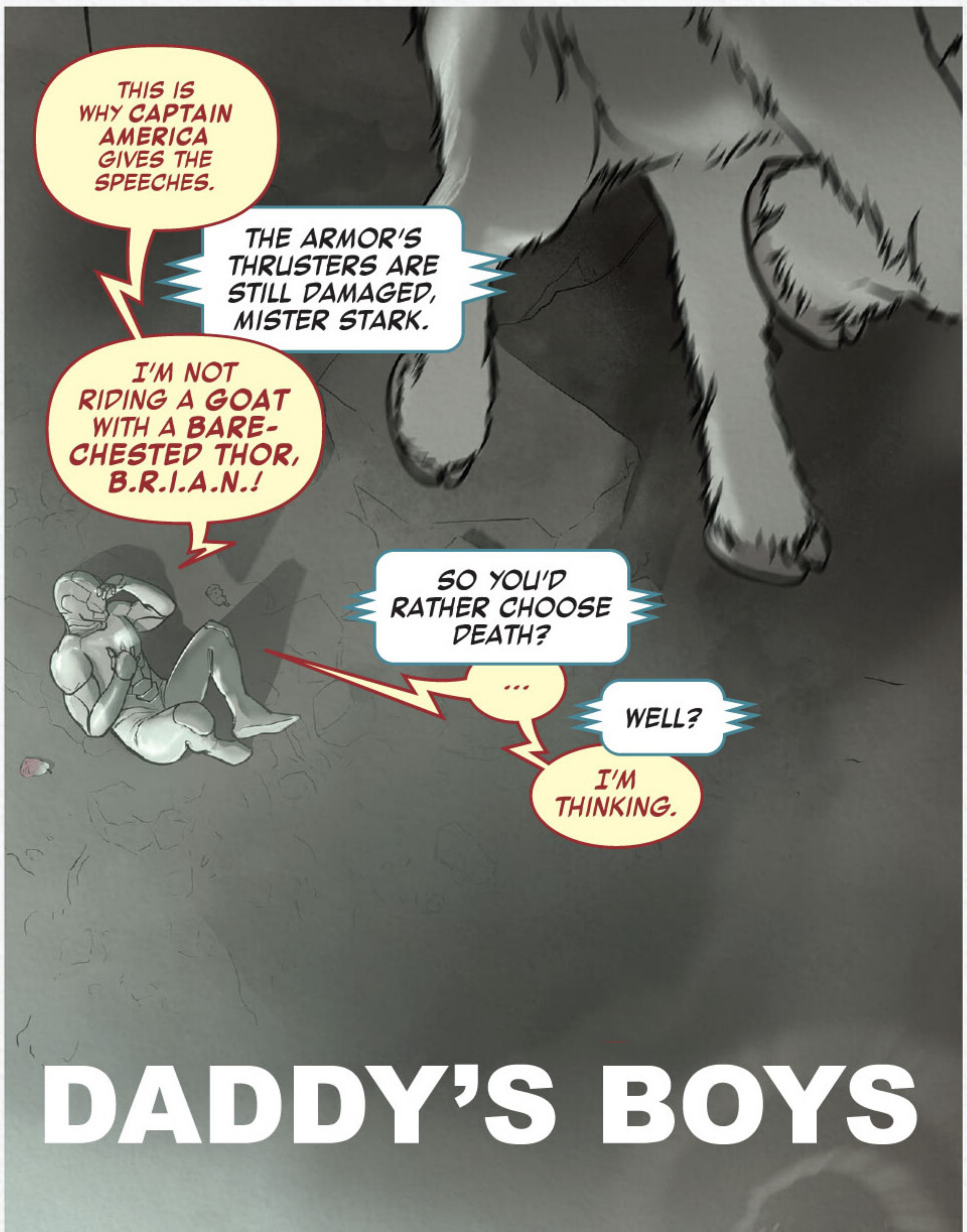

"WITH ASGARD IN PERIL, ODIN DID THE IMPOSSIBLE. HE BATTLED THE GREAT STORM, GOD TEMPEST, THE DESTROYER OF REALMS, TO SAVE HIS PEOPLE.
"WITH HIS MIGHT, HE TRAPPED THE STORM IN A PRECIOUS CHUNK OF URU. WITH HIS POWER, HE HAD THE DWARVES FORGE IT INTO A WEAPON.
"THE WEAPON, SITTING ON A SLAB FOR CENTURIES, WOULD NOT ALLOW ANY TO WIELD IT..."


...UNTIL IT CHOSE ME... THE SON OF ODIN.
I'M SORRY, STARK. NOTHING YOU FASHION CAN EVER...FEEL THE SAME.


I... ⸗SIGH⸗
OVER THE YEARS, I'VE DISCOVERED AT LEAST TEN MORE EFFICIENT WAYS TO POWER MY SUIT.


BUT I KEEP GOING BACK TO DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THE ARC REACTOR BECAUSE I CAN'T STOP PICTURING THE SMILE ON HIS FACE IF HE SAW WHAT I'VE DONE WITH HIS DESIGNS... LIKE HE WAS STILL...HERE.
...LIKE, "LOOK, DAD. I GOT IT TO WORK." SO I PUT A DANGEROUS POWER SOURCE OVER MY CHEST BECAUSE IT BRINGS ME MORE COMFORT THAN IF IT WASN'T THERE.
I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'LL EVER GET MJOLNIR BACK. BUT WHAT MAKES MJOLNIR SPECIAL TO YOU--THAT FEELING YOU'VE HAD SO MUCH OF WHEN THE HAMMER WAS WITH YOU--


--IT'S NOT GONE. IT'S STILL THERE. IT CAN'T BE TAKEN AWAY FROM US.
YOU ARE A TRUE FRIEND, STARK. AND YOUR FATHER WOULD BE VERY PROUD. BUT I'M SORRY. I STILL NEED MY HAMMER.


THIS IS WHY CAPTAIN AMERICA GIVES THE SPEECHES.
THE ARMOR'S THRUSTERS ARE STILL DAMAGED, MISTER STARK.
I'M NOT RIDING A GOAT WITH A BARE-CHESTED THOR, B.R.I.A.N.!
SO YOU'D RATHER CHOOSE DEATH?
...
WELL?
I'M THINKING.

DADDY'S BOYS

1

THE PAST.
YES, *TONY STARK* IS *IRON MAN.*
WE ALL KNOW THAT.
THE PRESENT.
BUT THIS MAN WHO SEEMS SO FORTUNATE...
...WHO'S ENVIED BY MILLIONS...
J. JONAH
SPIDER-M MENAC
BREAKING NEWS
Reed Richards Discovers New, Dangerous "Cosmic Flares."
THE FUTURE.
...IS SOON DESTINED TO BECOME THE MOST TRAGIC FIGURE ON EARTH!

I AM...
IRON MAN

CHAPTER ONE:
HERO

THE PAST.
hoice
CINEMA
KRAK
BURST

RUN!
PUNCH
KATCH
?
WHAT?!
YOU HAVE *NO IDEA* WHO I AM, DO YOU?
FLICK

LAND
GRAK
COME!
SKREEEEE

I AM...
IRON MAN.

YO, IRON MAN!
SETTLE DOWN, BOYS.
TRANS--
--FORM
LEMME GIVE YOU SOME BASS.

TWANGG!
LET'S DANCE.
DASH

DODGE
WHA
OFFICE 63
BOOOOM
Car Park
Level
4
BOOOM
BOOM

GUK
WHAT...
INHALE
EXHALE
...DO YOU WANT?
YOU'RE *DYING.*
I GUESS THIS IS THE ERA WHEN THE ARMOR IS WHAT'S KEEPING YOU ALIVE.
INHALE
EXHALE
INHALE
SIGH
THIS IS NO FUN, *TONY.* I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH CHARGE FOR THIS.
I'LL BE BACK AFTER YOU'VE SOLVED THIS WHOLE *"BUM TICKER"* SITUATION YOU'VE GOT GOING ON HERE.
EXHALE

"YOU'LL KNOW WHEN TO EXPECT ME."
THE PRESENT.
I'M GOING TO NEED YOU ALL TO PACK YOUR THINGS AND LEAVE.
IT'S NOT SAFE HERE... NOT ANYMORE.
SURE, DUDE. IT'S NOT SAFE, BUT SOMEHOW IRON MAN IS THE ONLY HERO ON DUTY.
THIS DEFINITELY HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOUR HABIT OF CLEARING OUT NICE PLACES SO YOU CAN HAVE YOUR DATES IN PRIVACY.
WOW! SMART GUY WE'VE GOT HERE.
THIS IS BILLIONAIRE TONY STARK'S IDEA OF A NICE PLACE.
ELSEWHERE.
DINE INN
JERK.

'SUP, IRON MAN!
WHAT'S THIS ABOUT EVACUATING MY BUSINESS?
HEY! EARTH TO IRON MAN.
SNAP
SHE'S COVERED IN BRUISES SHE TRIES TO HIDE WITH SO MUCH MAKEUP.
THERE ARE A COUPLE OF CRACKS IN HER BONES.
YET SHE DANCES LIKE GRAVITY HAS GOT NOTHING ON HER.
YEAH. LIFE'S HARD.
I'M SURE YOU BREAK MORE THINGS THAN BONES SAVING OUR HIDES FROM INSIDE THAT SUIT.
BUT JUST LIKE THE REST OF US, YOU GOTTA MAKE IT LOOK... EFFORTLESS.
BY THE WAY, YOU HAVE LESS THAN FIVE MINUTES TO GET AS FAR AWAY FROM HERE AS POSSIBLE.
SOMETHING IS COMING.

I DON'T MEAN TO SOUND UNGRATEFUL, **IRON MAN,** BUT SHOULDN'T YOU BE SOMEWHERE ELSE?
CHUCKLE
I'M NEEDED HERE TOO, MA'AM. YOU'RE TOP PRIORITY.
BUT DON'T YOU WORRY YOURSELF. MY **ACTUAL BODY** IS **SOMEWHERE ELSE.**
SHE'S HERE.
K.A.T.I.E., ARE YOU PICKING UP THE AUDIO?
YES, **MISTER STARK.**
TRIANGULATE THE SOURCE.
TRIANGULATING...
THE SOURCE OF THE MUSIC IS CONSTANTLY SHIFTING. IT'S TAKING A WHILE TO TRIANGULATE ITS EXACT LOCATION.
IS IT MOVING TOWARD US OR AWAY FROM US?
TOWARD US.
IT'S ABOVE US, ISN'T IT?

WHAM
YES.
SLUMP!
!
SLOUCH
FALL
CRASH

I #$&%$# WRECKED IRON MAN...
...AGAIN.
BREAKING NEWS
IRON MAN IS DEAD?
"SPIDER-MAN IS STILL A MENACE," SAYS J. JONAH JA
BREAKING NEWS
IRON MAN
LA ME
I HEARD TODAY WAS HIS BIRTHDAY TOO.
HE'S DEAD?

NO.
IT ENDS HERE, "JERRICA BENTON."
THE FUTURE.
WOW. NAME-CALLING.
GOOD TO SEE THAT YOUR INTELLIGENCE WAS NOT GROSSLY EXAGGERATED.
LET'S GET RIGHT TO IT, HUH?
READY WHEN YOU ARE.
IT'S...
CALL
...TIME...
GRAB
SHRE
...TO...
...SHRED.

WATCH HIS *AWESOME* APPROACH!
LISTEN TO HIS *THUNDEROUS* FOOTSTEPS...
...AS HE *BURSTS* CLOSER...
...CLOSER...
...CLOSER...
...FOR TODAY, YOU ARE DESTINED TO ENCOUNTER...

“...THE INVINCIBLE
IRON MAN!”

NOW.
YOU.
YEAH. ME.
YOU'VE CORNERED LI'L OL' FANGIRL TAMI.
I'M SO SCARED.
KRAOUNNN
UCK!
#$%& YEAH!
AND IRON MAN BITES THE DUST...
...IN HIS PRIME.
SURE.
WE ALL MAKE OUR OWN REALITIES, I GUESS.

FORM
?
BUT THAT WAS A CONSTRUCT.
EVERYTHING IS A CONSTRUCT.
ALSO, YOUR SIX O'CLOCK. OR IS IT TWELVE O'CLOCK? I FORGET.
A COSMIC FLARE WAS COMING FOR THE REAL TIMES SQUARE.
TO SAVE EVERYONE, I MOVED THE ENTIRETY OF NEW YORK CITY TO A POCKET DIMENSION. BUT THE POCKET DIMENSION COLLAPSED BEFORE I COULD BRING THEM BACK.
IN OTHER WORDS, I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU. YOU HAVE WHAT I NEED.
GRAB!
THIS IS HOW YOU TRAVEL ACROSS TIME?
I'M FROM THE FUTURE--
NO #$%&.
--AND I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO DOESN'T WORK.
I HAVE ONLY ONE CHARGE LEFT TO TAKE ME BACK TO MY TIME.
FORM
THEN I WILL USE TH--
?
YEAH. AGAIN, I KNOW.
YOU'LL USE MY LAST TIME CHARGE TO BRING NEW YORK BACK TO THIS CURRENT TIME BY FUNNELING THEM JUST BEFORE THEY WERE SENT TO THE POCKET DIMENSION.
THAT WORKS. YOU BRING EVERYONE BACK, INCLUDING MY NEW YORKER GREAT-GRANDPARENTS.
BECAUSE I SENT MY FAMILY TO THE POCKET DIMENSION FAR AHEAD OF THE REST OF THE CITY.
BUT YOU DON'T BRING YOUR FAMILY BACK.
YES. AND REALIZING THAT IS WHAT FINALLY BROKE YOU...WHY FIGHTING YOU IN MY TIME IS NO FUN.
THE UNIVERSE PUNISHED YOU THE ONE TIME YOU DIDN'T CHOOSE TO SAVE THE PEOPLE FIRST.
FORM
FORM
HEARING ALL THIS FROM YOU NOW, WHY DO YOU THINK I WON'T JUST BRING MY FAMILY BACK AND DAMN ALL OF NEW YORK?

...BECAUSE MY NEW YORKER SELF HASN'T FADED OUT OF EXISTENCE.
FORM
"...BECAUSE YOU ARE THEIR HERO.
FORM
FORM
"...BECAUSE YOU ARE IRON MAN."

2

C'MON... C'MON!
SLOW DOWN. SLOW DOWN.
JUST A LITTLE BIT.
NGH!
OKAY, THIS ISN'T WORKING.
MAYBE IF I USE MY ARMOR'S **THERMOCOUPLE FACTOR** TO CONVERT THE HEAT FROM THE ASTEROID INTO **THRUSTER POWER,** I CAN SLOW DOWN ITS DESCENT.

IT'S NO USE.
THE HEAT ENERGY EMANATING FROM THE ASTEROID IS NO MATCH FOR ITS IMMENSE KINETIC ENERGY.
I STILL CAN'T SLOW IT DOWN.
CRACK!
?
$#&%!
NO.
NORWAY.

<MA.>*
<WE HAVE TO LEAVE... NOW.>
<WE DON'T.>
*TRANSLATED FROM NORWEGIAN.
<CAN'T YOU SEE IT?>
<YES, MA. I SEE IT.>
<WE CAN'T OUTRUN IT, BUT WE STILL HAVE TO TRY.>
<NO. NOT THE ROCKS IN THE SKY.>
<LOOK HARDER.>
<"HE IS OUT THERE WITH THE FALLING ROCKS.>
<"HE WON'T LET THEM HURT US.>
<"HE'LL FIND A WAY TO SAVE US ALL.>
<"WHO ELSE WOULD...>
<"...IF NOT...>
"...IRON MAN."

I AM...
IRON MAN

CHAPTER TWO:
THE MAN WITH THE BLEEDING HEART

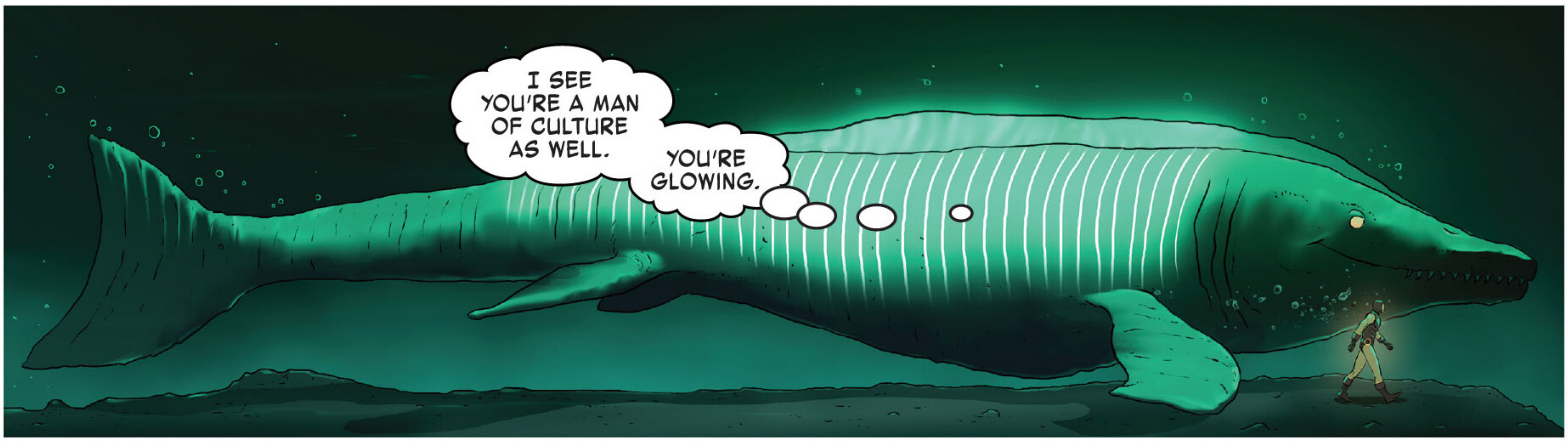
YOU THINK THAT'S THE LAST PIECE?
DOUBT IT.
YEAH. DIDN'T THINK SO EITHER.
FOUND A HOLE IN MY HALF-EATEN APPLE TODAY. NEVER DID FIND THE WORM.
RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS
E.L.D.
IT'S ONE OF THOSE KINDA DAYS, HUH?
FORGOT MY WALLET AT THE DINER THIS MORNING...
...JUST AFTER PICKING UP CASH AT THE BANK.
LADY LUCK ISN'T JUST GOING TO CHANGE HER MIND AND GIVE US A BREAK BY MAKING THIS THE LAST PIECE OF METEORITE.
S.H.I.E.L.D.
S.H.I.E.L.D.
ALL THE LUCK IN THE WORLD MUST HAVE MOVED TO THAT VILLAGE.
IF ONE OF THESE ROCKS HAD PAID THEM A VISIT...?
S.H.I.E.L.D.
S.H.I.E.L.D.
THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN A ***DIFFERENT*** KIND OF CLEANUP.

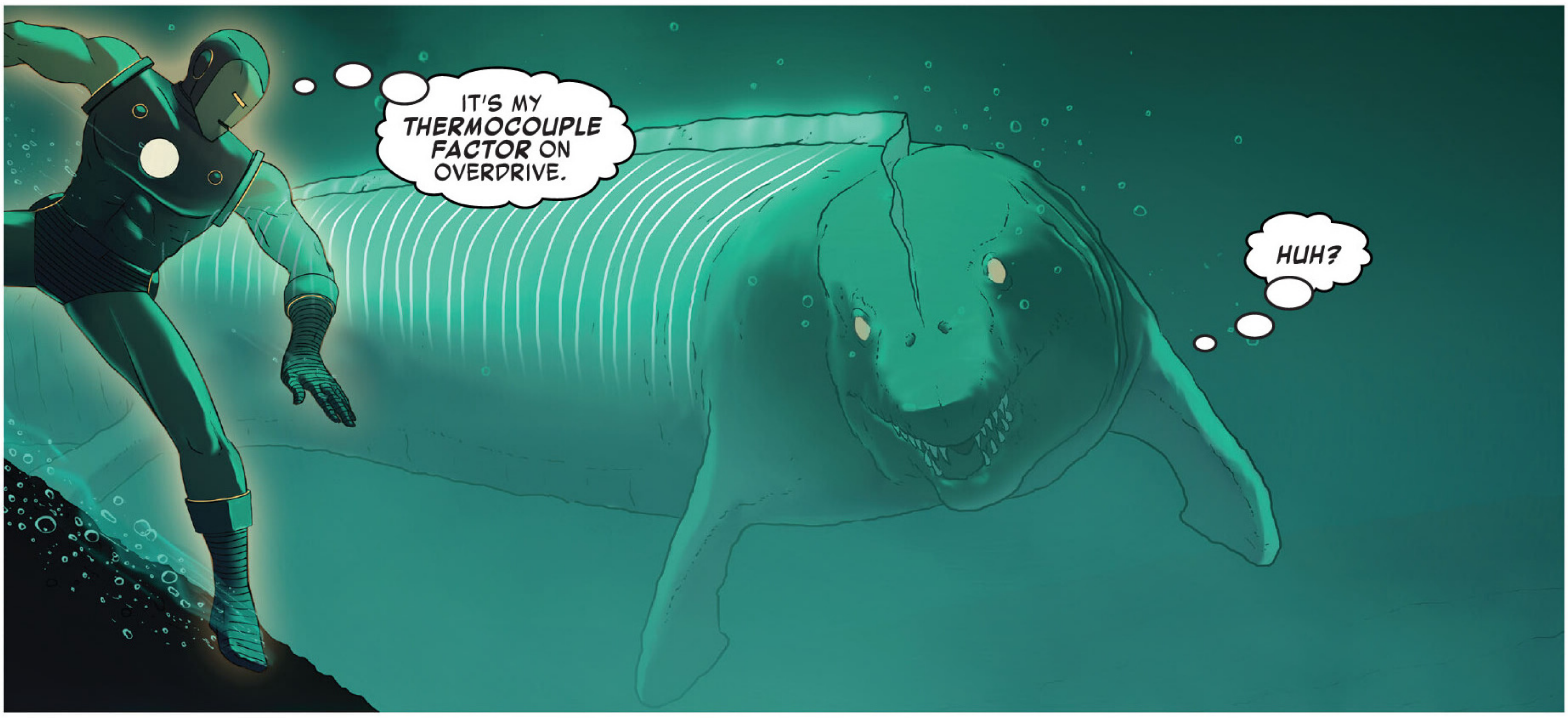
I'M ALIVE!

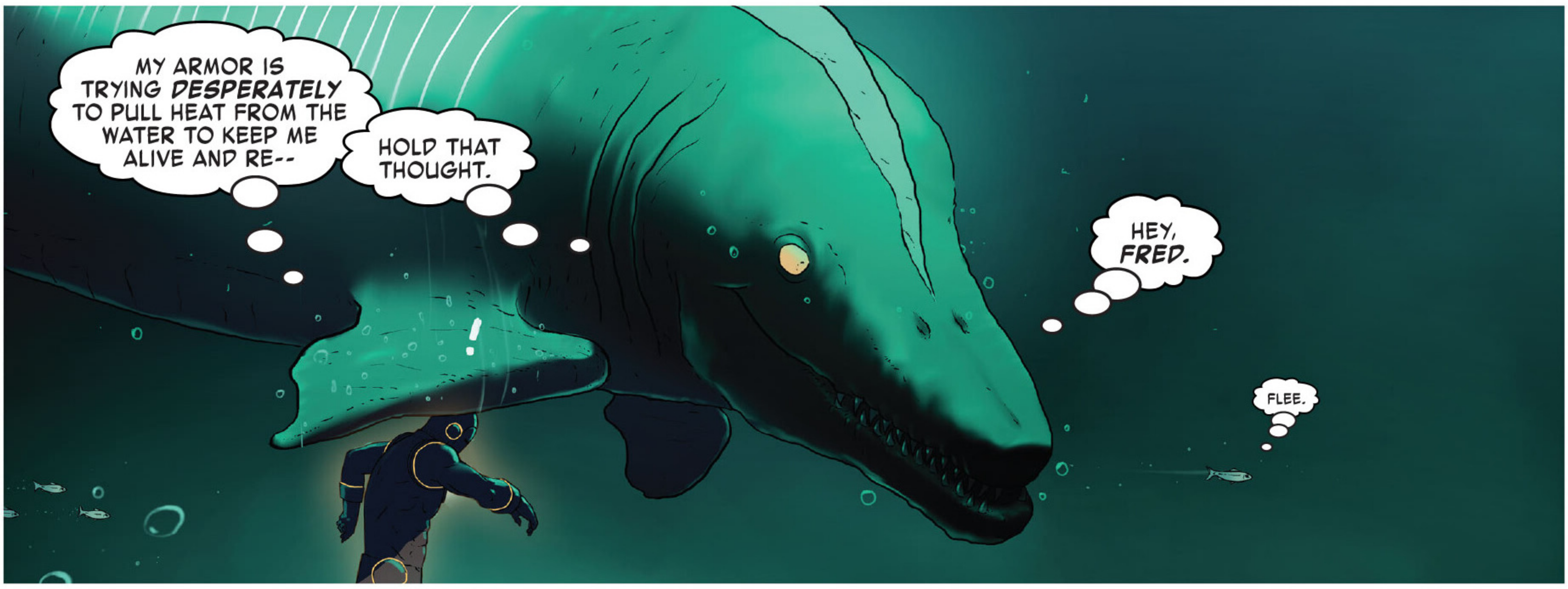
YOU ARE?
WELL, THAT'S AWKWARD.
I ALMOST ATE YOU.
I DON'T SPEAK *BUBBLES*, BUDDY.
I SPEAK *FLORESCENCE* PRETTY WELL THOUGH.
BUT *FREDS* DON'T LIKE IT VERY MUCH. IT STARTLES THEM.
AGAIN, I DON'T SPEAK *BUBBLES!*
THINK OUT YOUR WORDS.
I'LL PICK IT UP.
I DON'T GET IT.
WHAT'S IT SAYING?
THERE YOU GO!
NOW I CAN UNDERSTAND YOU.
OH. OKAY.
I SAID...
"GET AS FAR AWAY FROM HERE AS POSSIBLE IF YOU DON'T WANT TO DIE."

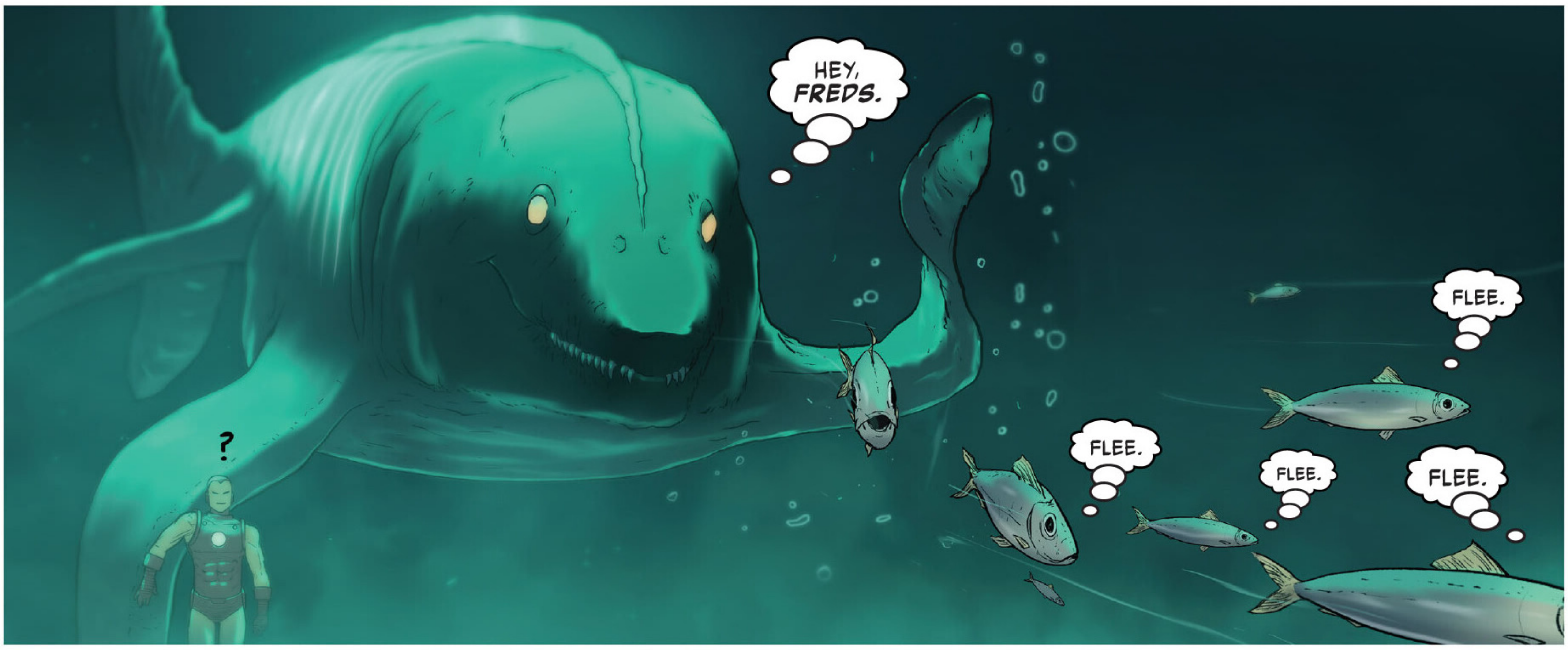
IS THAT A THREAT?!
ITS SCALES ARE LIKE METAL SHEETS.
IT ALL LOOKS LIKE SOFT TISSUE IN THERE.
BETTER SHOOT A ***REPULSOR BEAM*** DOWN ITS THROAT.
UGK!
I DON'T HAVE IT IN ME ANYMORE.
JUST KILL ME ALREADY.
I'M NOT TRYING TO KILL YOU.
SHOOT YOUR ***"REPROSOLVE"*** DOWN MY THROAT.
REPULSOR.
HUH?
BLESS YOU.
LOOK, I'M NOT TRYING TO KILL YOU.
THIS IS WHAT I GET FOR ALL THE ***FREDS*** I'VE EATEN.
I'M NOT TRYING TO KILL YOU!
WHAT?
I'M NOT TRYING TO KILL YOU!!!

OH.
YOU SHOULD HAVE SAID THAT EARLIER.
WELL, IT WAS NICE MEETING YOU.
NOT REALLY.
I CAN STILL HEAR YOUR THOUGHTS.
WASN'T TRYING TO HIDE THEM.
THERE'S A ***LARGE PIECE*** OF ***RADIOACTIVE ASTEROID*** THAT CRASHED IN THIS PART OF THE OCEAN.
IT'LL PROBABLY KILL ANYTHING CLOSE TO IT.
SO FOLLOWING ME ON MY JOURNEY TO FIND THE ***LOST*** ASTEROID PIECE IS A BAD IDEA IF YOU LIKE BEING...
...YOU KNOW...
...ALIVE.
IS IT STILL *"LOST"* IF I KNOW WHERE IT IS?
YOU CAN ***READ*** MY MIND.
YOU KNOW I'VE ***LITERALLY*** EATEN FISHES MEANER LOOKING THAN YOU FOR BREAKFAST.
IF YOU'RE LYING--
WANT ME TO TAKE YOU TO IT OR NOT?


I SEE YOU'RE A MAN OF CULTURE AS WELL.
YOU'RE GLOWING.

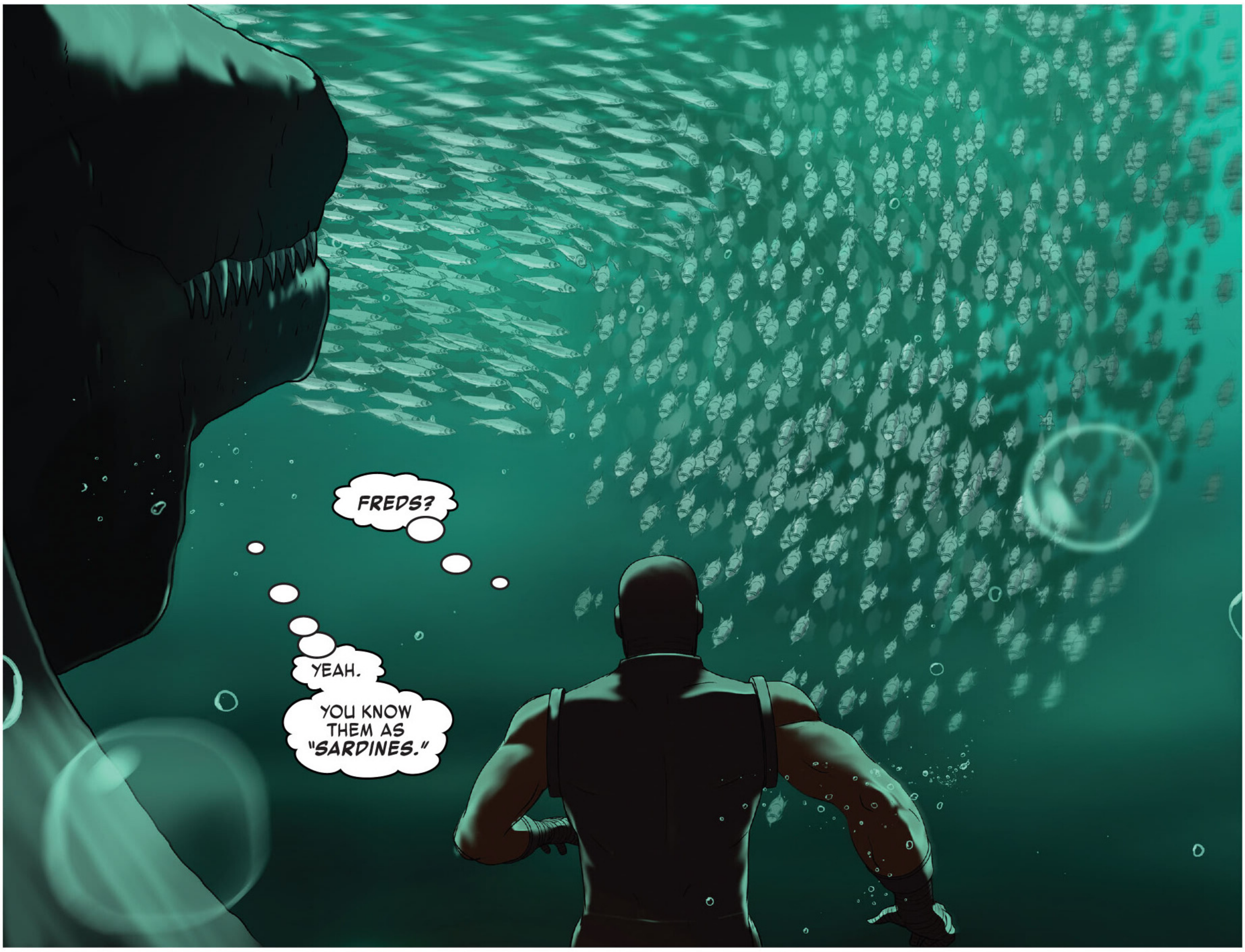

IT'S MY **THERMOCOUPLE FACTOR** ON OVERDRIVE.
HUH?

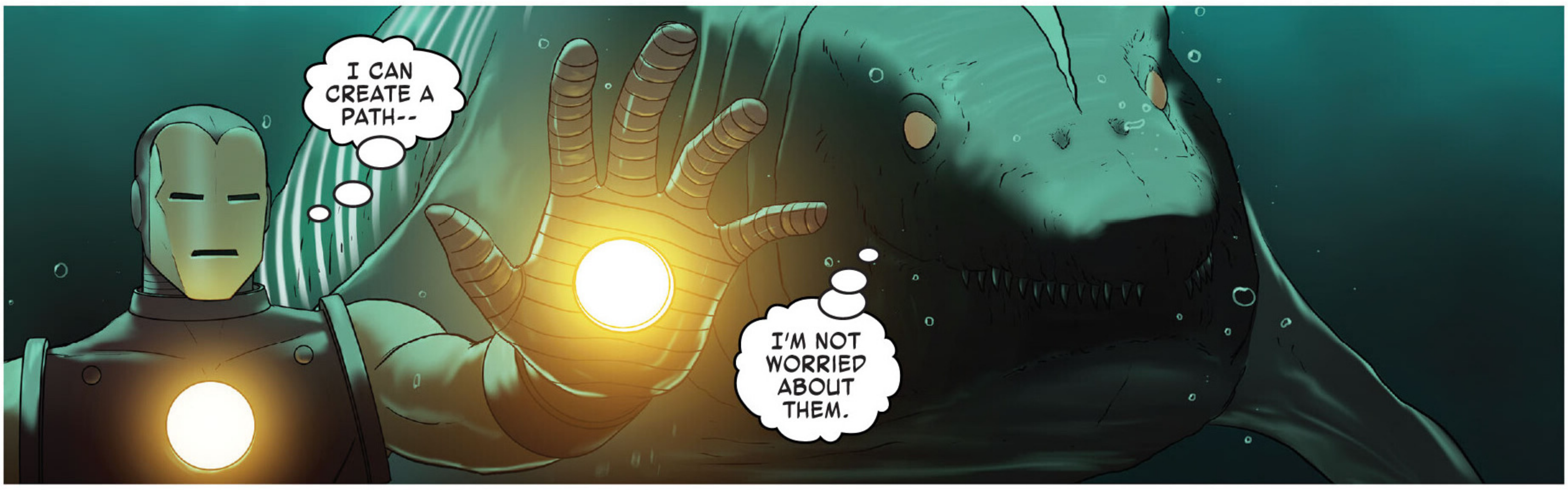

MY ARMOR IS TRYING **DESPERATELY** TO PULL HEAT FROM THE WATER TO KEEP ME ALIVE AND RE--
HOLD THAT THOUGHT.
!
HEY, **FRED.**
FLEE.

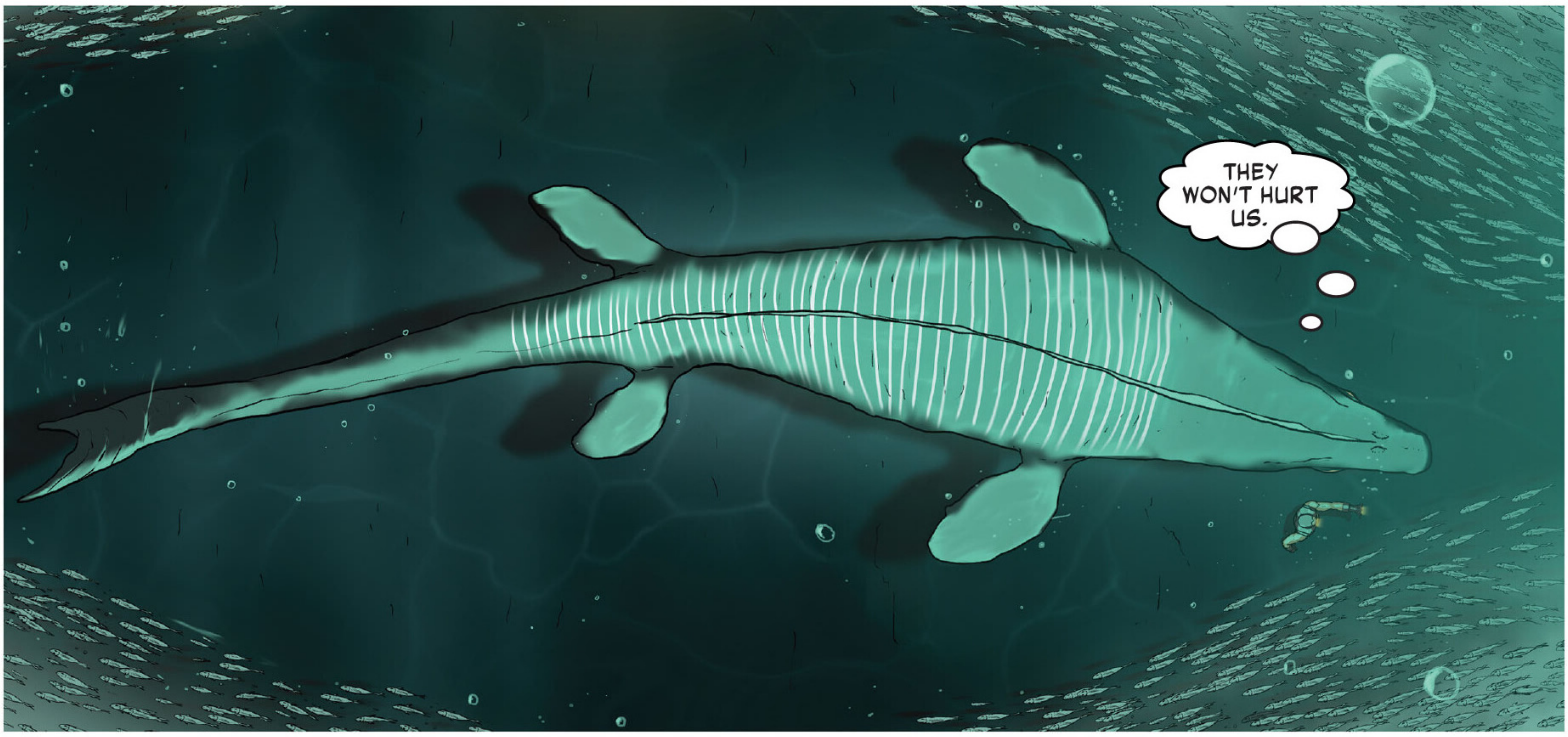

HEY, **FREDS.**
?
FLEE.
FLEE.
FLEE.
FLEE.

THAT'S WEIRD.
ARE WE LOST?
NO. NOT THAT.
FREDS HAVE VERY SIMPLE THOUGHTS.
THEY THINK ONLY IN THE FIVE F's.
MM-HMM.
FLEE.
FIGHT.
FROLIC.
FEED.
AND FL
I THINK I GET THE IDEA.
BUT ALL THE FREDS I'VE MET IN THIS PART OF THE OCEAN SEEM TO BE STUCK ON...

..."FLEE."

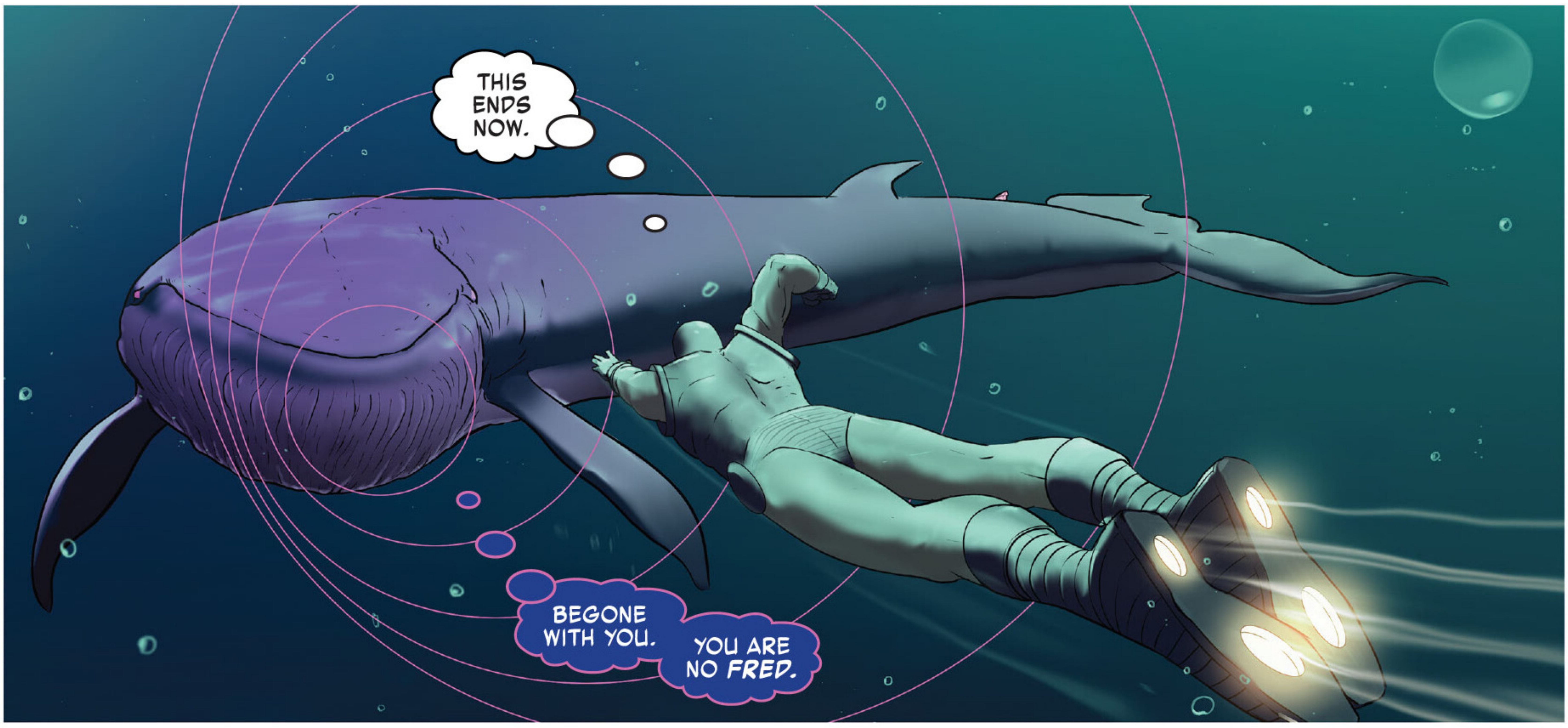

FREDS?
YEAH.
YOU KNOW THEM AS "SARDINES."

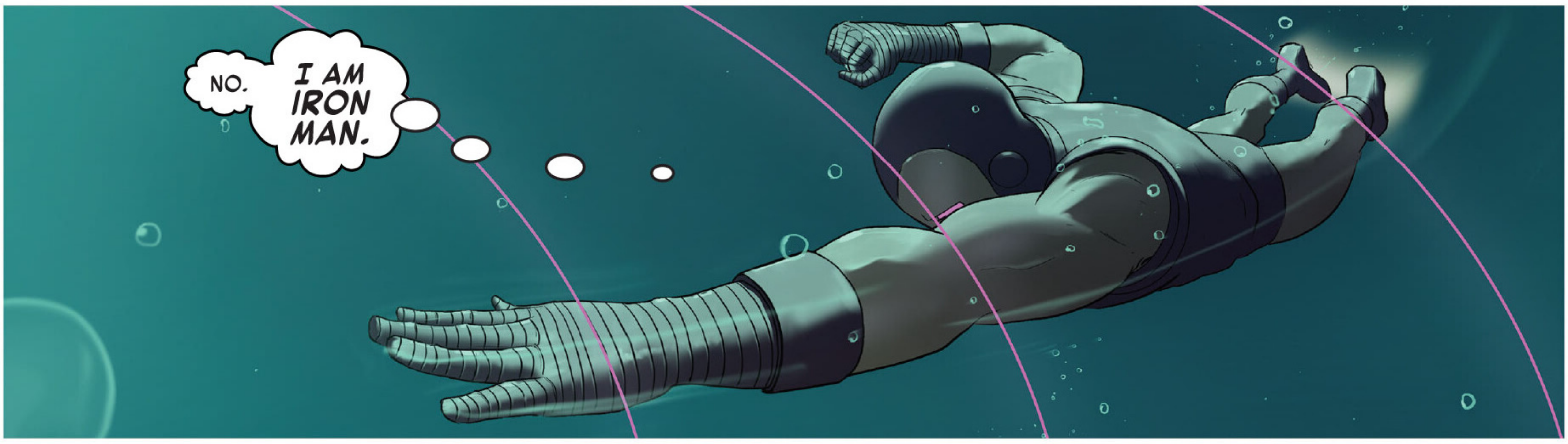

I CAN CREATE A PATH--
I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT THEM.

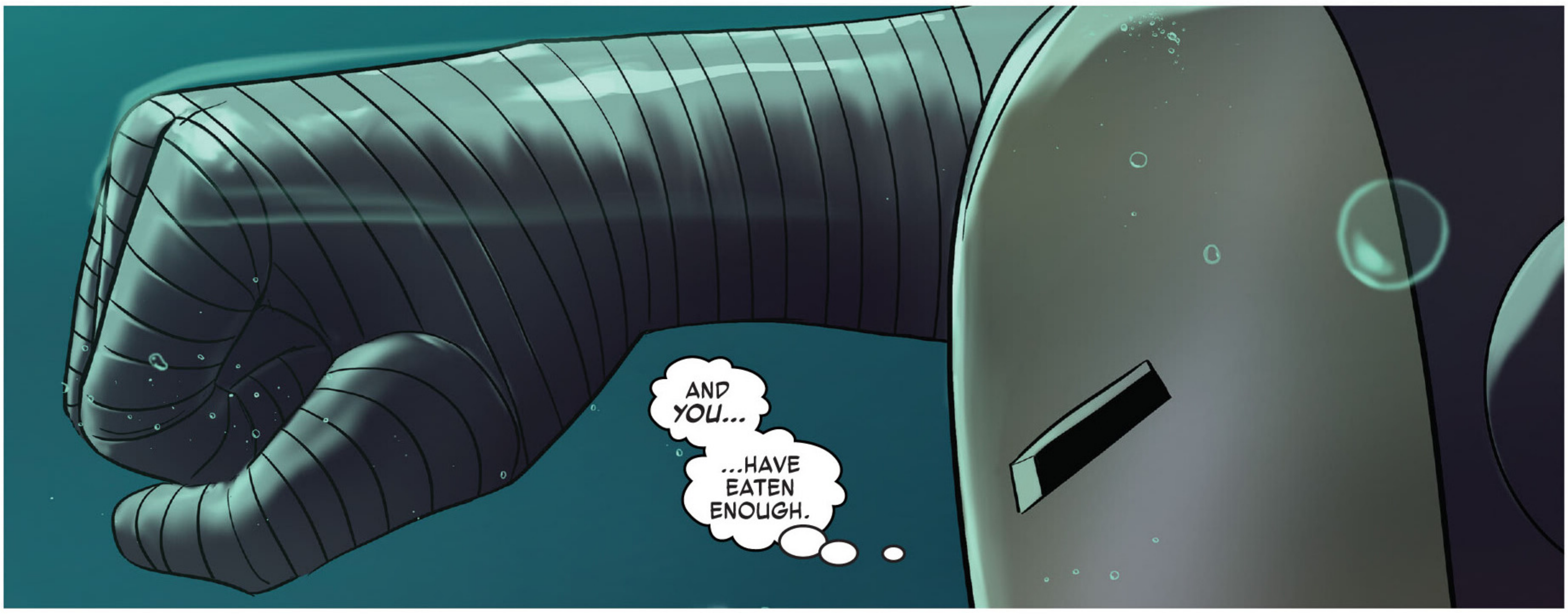

THEY WON'T HURT US.

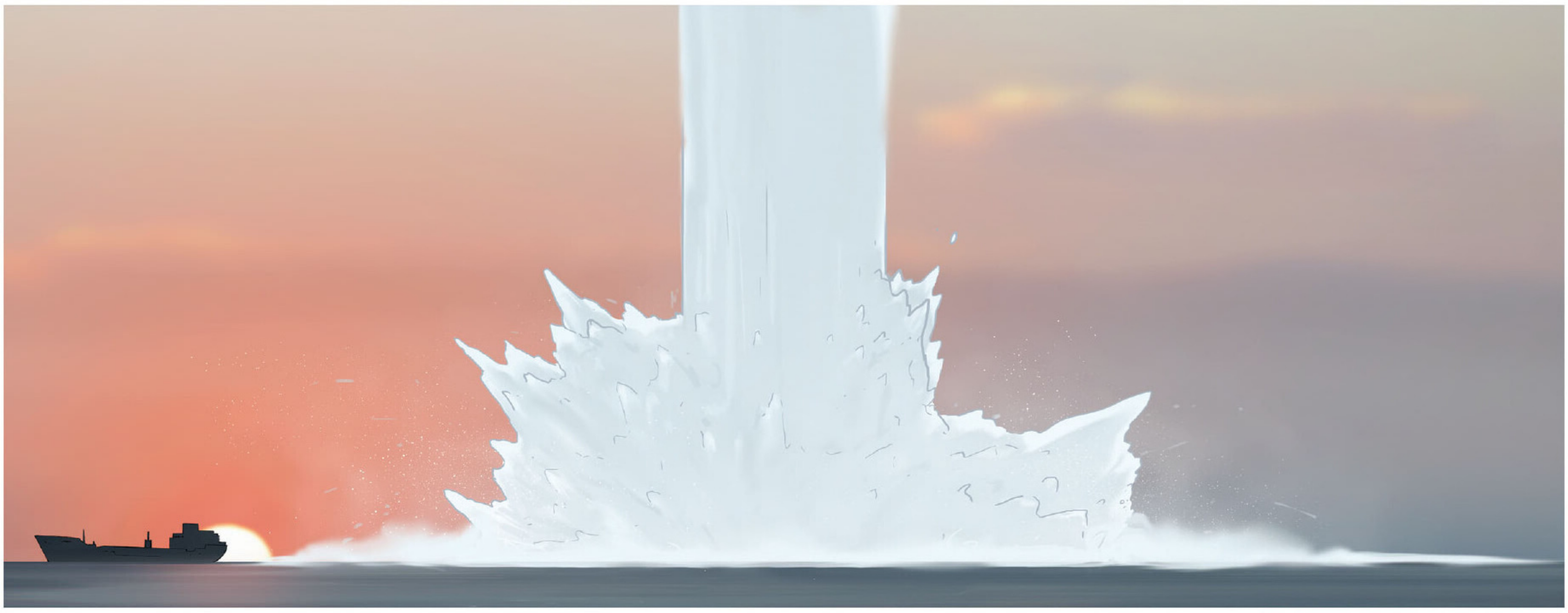
I'M MORE WORRIED ABOUT WHAT THEY ARE SWIMMING AWAY FROM.
THERE IT IS.
THE LAST PIECE OF THE ASTEROID.
YES.
IT TAKES LIVES...
...OR GRANTS POWER.
COME TO ME...
...FREDS.
!

C'MON, YOU *GIANT LIZARD,* YOU CAN FIGHT THIS.
I CAN'T.
MY BODY WILL NOT HEED MY THOUGHTS.
I USED TO BE A *FRED* BEFORE YOUR ASTEROID PIECE FOUND ME.
DEEP DOWN, I SUPPOSE I'M STILL ONE. SO MY BODY ANSWERS THE CALL.
PLEASE TAKE YOUR ASTEROID PIECE AND *FLEE.*
YOU'LL ONLY GET *EATEN* TOO IF YOU TRY TO SAVE ME.
THE STRONG FEAST ON THE WEAK.
THAT IS THE *LAW* OF THE OCEAN... OF *NATURE.*
NO.


THIS ENDS NOW.
BEGONE WITH YOU.
YOU ARE NO ***FRED***.

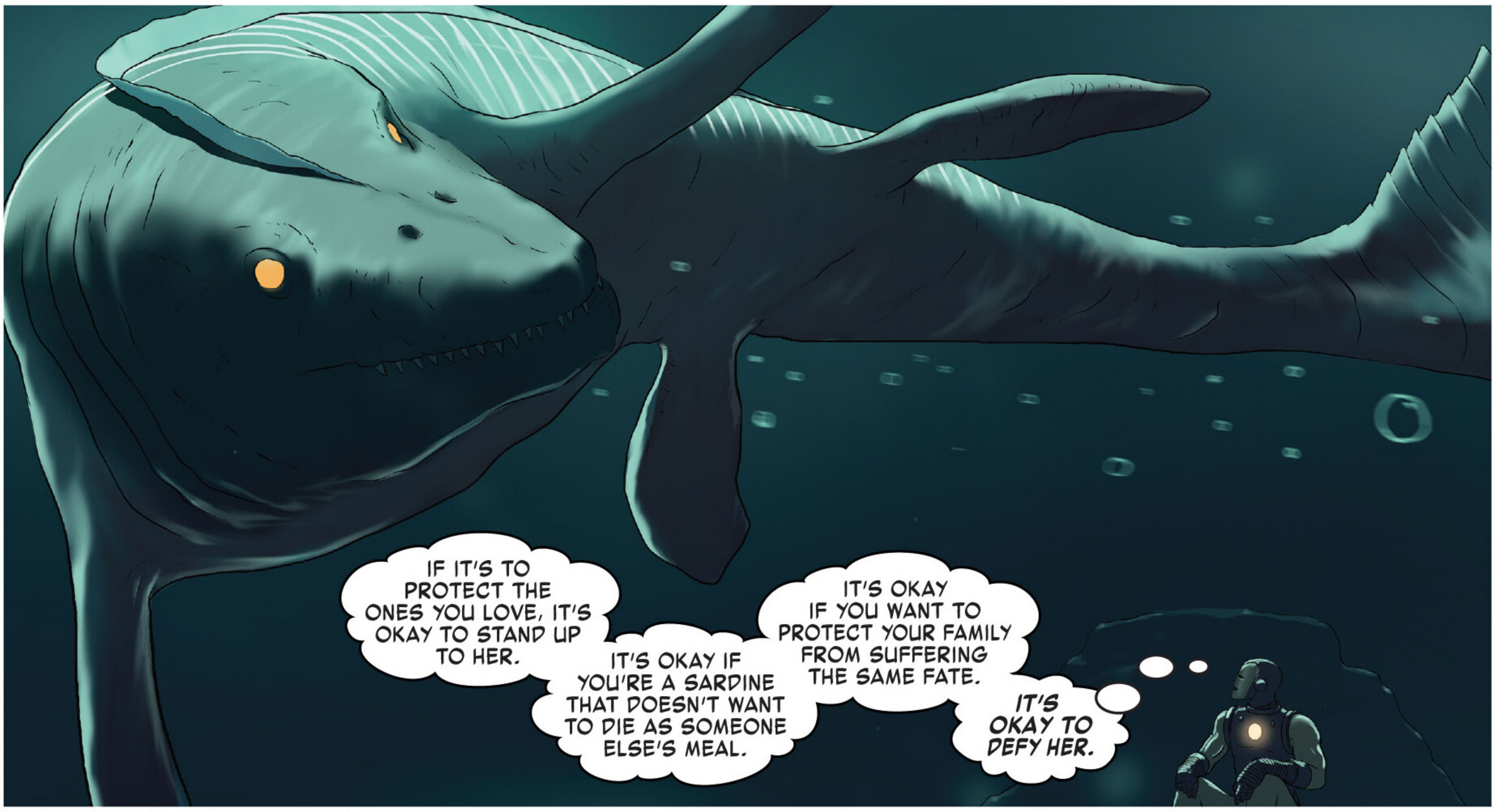

NO.
I AM IRON MAN.

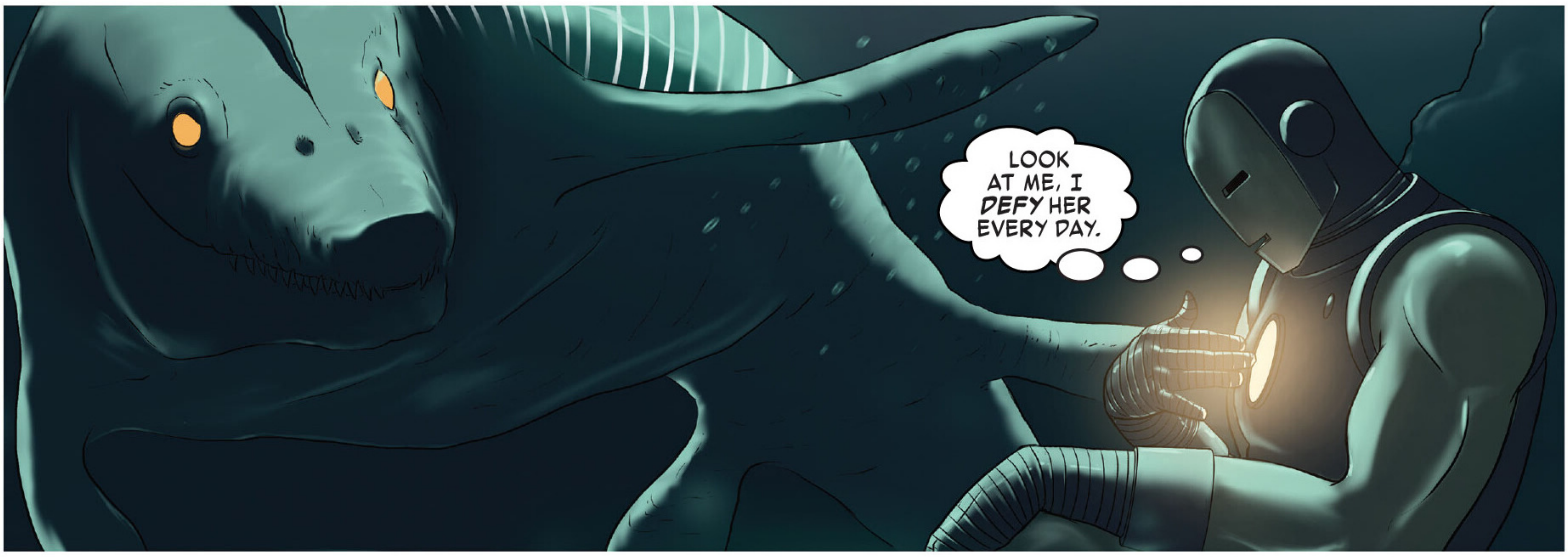

AND ***YOU***...
...HAVE EATEN ENOUGH.

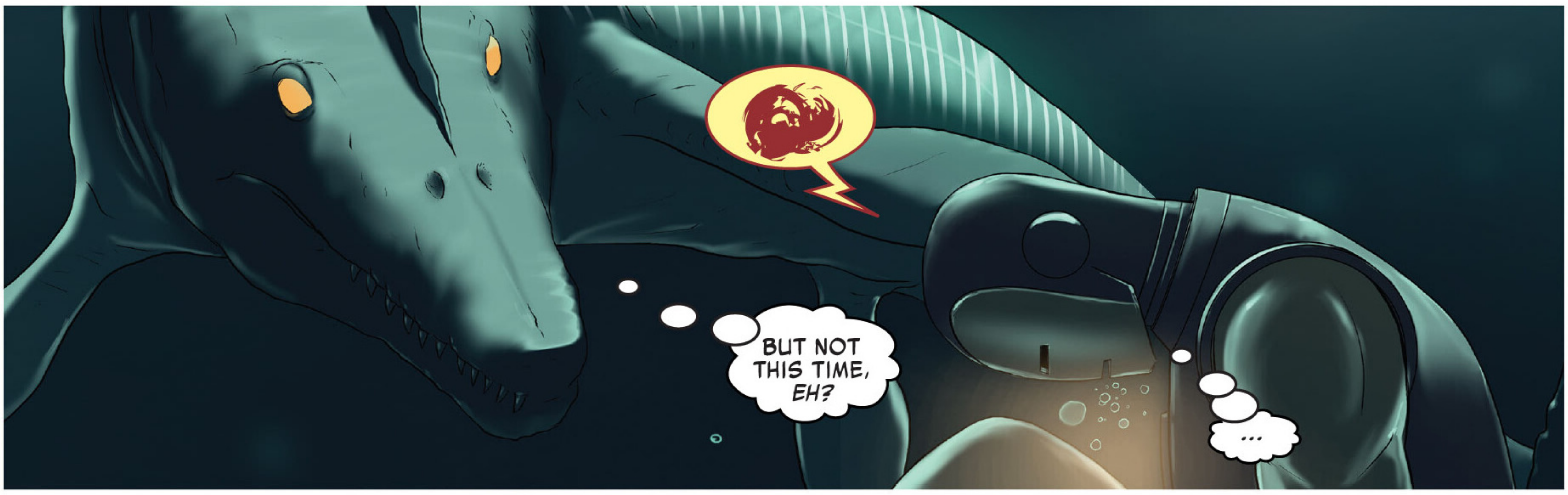


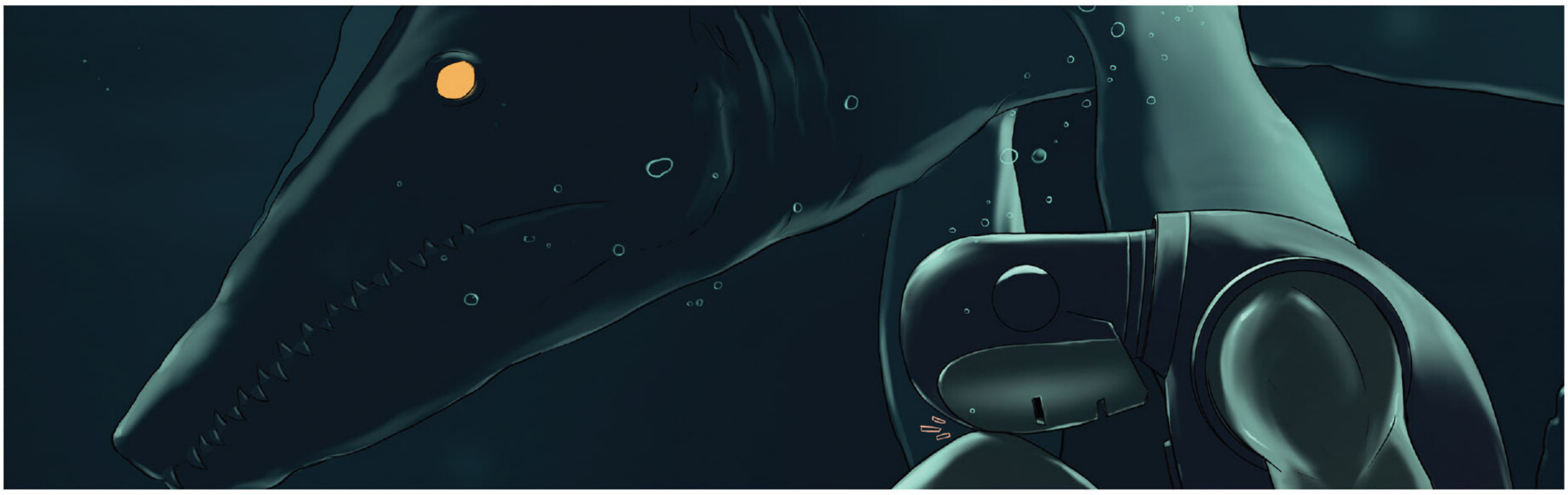
THAT COULD BE YOUR GUTS SPLASHING AGAINST THE OCEAN'S SURFACE IF YOU DON'T LEAVE.
NOW.
THERE'S NO WAY YOU'RE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO DO THAT AGAIN.
...TO ME.
YOUR THOUGHTS ALREADY BETRAY YOUR FALSE RESOLVE.
I HOPE HE BUYS THIS--
I'M OUT OF--
3.1415926535 8979323846 2643383279
5028841971 6939937510 5820974944
5923078164 0628620899 8628034825
3421170679...

GOT YOU, BUDDY.
IF MY ARMOR LOSES ENOUGH POWER, SHE STOPS MY HEART.
SHE SENT AN ASTEROID THAT COULD WIPE OUT HUMANITY JUST FOR THE FUN OF IT.
MOTHER NATURE IS THE HOTTEST WOMAN I DON'T DREAM OF GOING OUT WITH.


IF IT'S TO PROTECT THE ONES YOU LOVE, IT'S OKAY TO STAND UP TO HER.
IT'S OKAY IF YOU'RE A SARDINE THAT DOESN'T WANT TO DIE AS SOMEONE ELSE'S MEAL.
IT'S OKAY IF YOU WANT TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM SUFFERING THE SAME FATE.
IT'S OKAY TO DEFY HER.


LOOK AT ME, I *DEFY* HER EVERY DAY.


BUT NOT THIS TIME, *EH?*
...



LET DIRECTOR FURY KNOW, WE FOUND HIM.
IRON MAN IS ALIVE!
S.H.I.E.L.D.

3

YOU SENSE IT.
DANGER.
YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO.
YOU'VE TRAINED FOR IT YOUR WHOLE LIFE.
BATTLE.

AWESOME.
NOW SHEATHE YOUR SWORDS ALL COOL STYLE.
LET THE UNIVERSE SEE IT.
LET THE UNIVERSE COME TO **KNOW** IT.
THAT YOU ARE **BADASS.**

YOU MOVED SO **FAST**...
...THAT THEY DIDN'T NOTICE YOU CUT DOWN THE HORDE OF **ONI** WHO STALKED YOU.
HOW?
HOW DID YOU KNOW WE WERE **HUNTING** YOU?
THE UNIVERSE WILL REALIZE AT THIS VERY MOMENT THAT IT CAN FINALLY SLEEP PEACEFULLY IN THE SHADOWS OF THE NIGHT.
WH-WHO ARE YOU?
FOR THE **IRON SHOGUN** IS HERE.

I AM... IRON MAN

CHAPTER THREE: BEST FRIEND

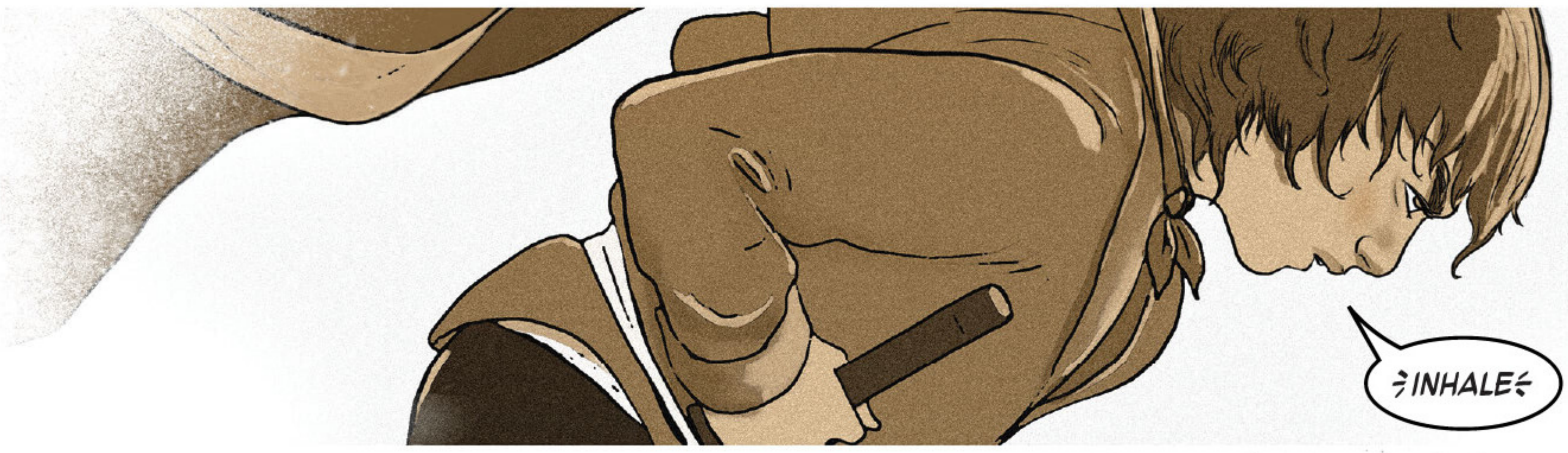
NO...
YOUR VILLAGE...
...IS BURNING.
MY VILLAGE.
THIS IS SOMETHING YOU **CAN'T** DEFEAT BY SWINGING YOUR SWORDS AT IT.
THIS... THIS IS YOUR **INCITING INCIDENT.**
NOTHING WILL BE THE SAME FROM HERE ON OUT.

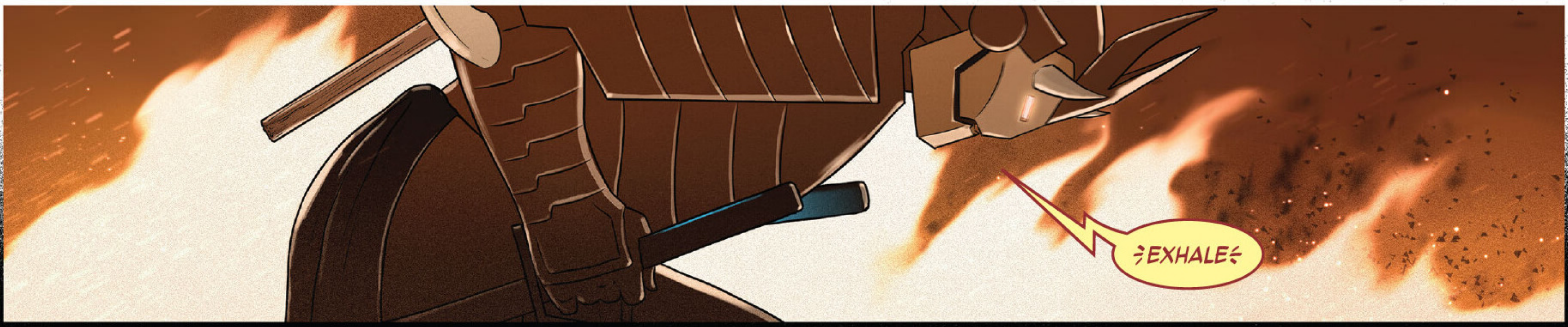
WAR MONGER.
FORGIVE ME, OLD FRIEND.
I COULD NOT PROTECT THE VILLAGE.

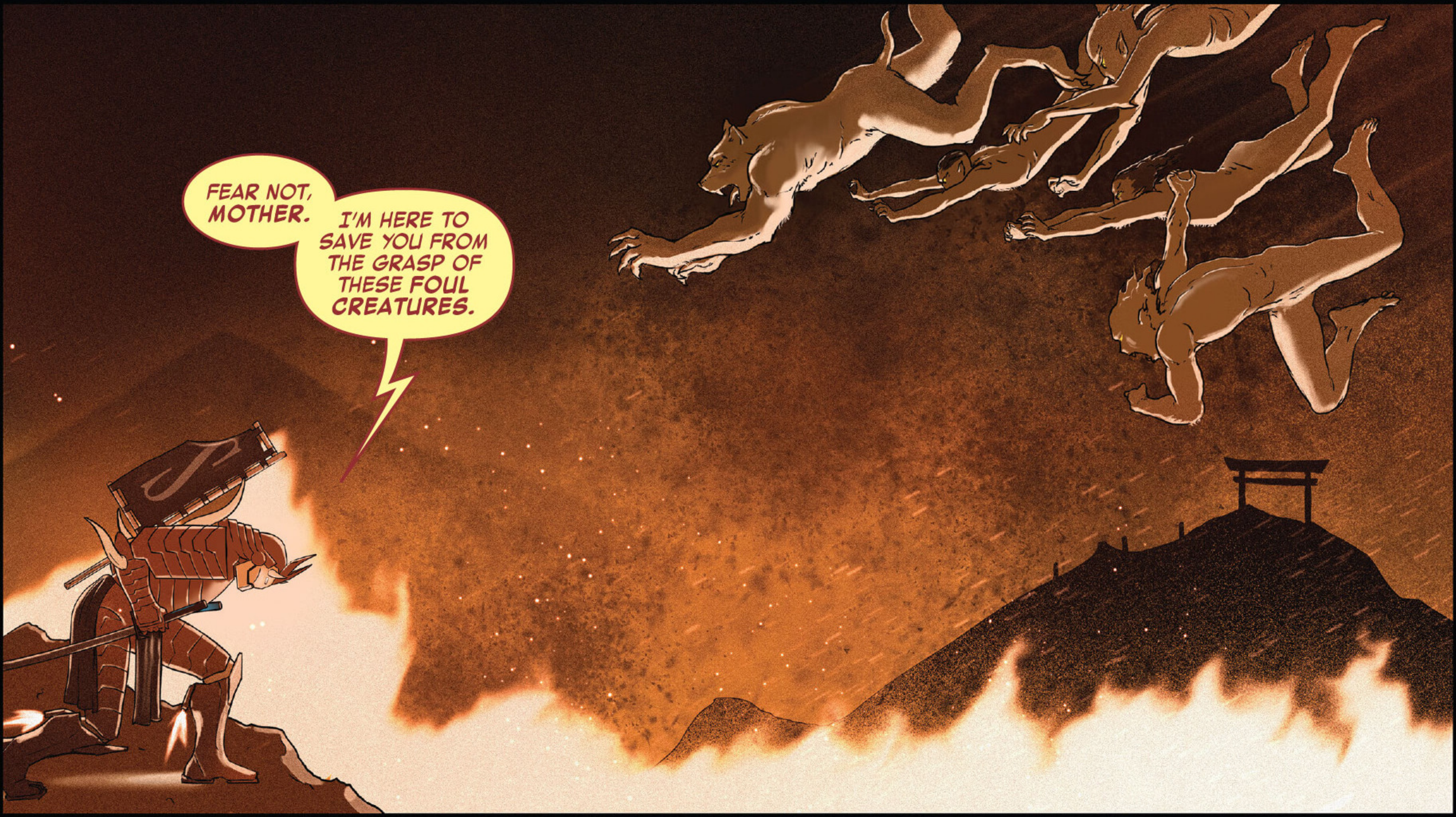
WATER.
COUGH COUGH
I NEED WATER, IRON SHOGUN.
?
NOPE.
NO WAY I'M DRINKING STUFF THAT JUST SHOWED UP OUT OF NOWHERE.
YOU'LL GET US KILLED, RHODEY.
STICK TO THE SCRIPT.
OH GAWD.
WHAT HAVE YOU GOTTEN US INTO, TONY?
TRUST ME.
I'LL GET US OUT OF THIS.
JUST DRINK UP.

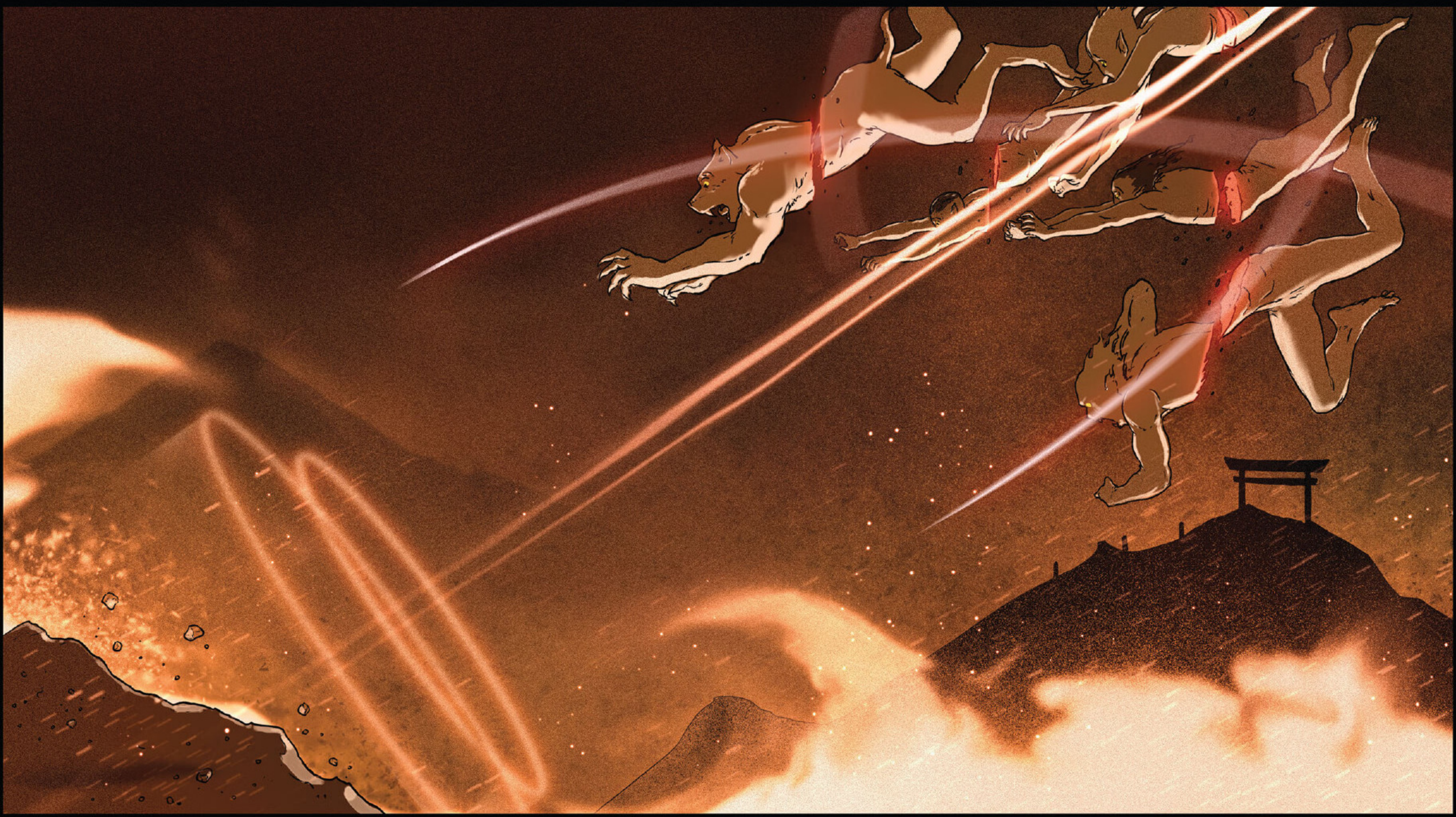
⸗COUGH⸗
⸗COUGH⸗
POISON?
WORSE.
IT'S SODA.
I'M ON A DIET.
NO DOUBT ABOUT IT.
YOU'RE **DEFINITELY** GOING TO GET US KILLED.
OKAY. OKAY. OKAY.
I'LL GET INTO CHARACTER.
JUST GIVE ME A SEC.
IT CAME FROM THE MIST-- HIDDEN AWAY FROM OUR WATCH UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE.
I TRIED TO STOP IT...
...BUT IT WAS TOO POWERFUL.
IT TOOK YOUR MOTHER, **IRON SHOGUN.**
MY MOTHER?
MY MOTHER IS ALIVE?
SPEAK.
SPEAK, OLD FRIEND.
WHERE IS MY MOTHER?
WHAT TOOK MY MOTHER?

"THE ONI QUEEN."
SAVE ME, IRON SAMURAI.
...
IRON RONIN?
IT'S IRON SHOGUN, MOM.
SAME DIFFERENCE, DEAR.
I'M NOT PLAYING ANYMORE IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TAKE IT SERIOUSLY.
I AM TAKING IT SERIOUSLY.
NO, YOU'RE NOT.
YOU'RE READING "STEAMY COMIC BOOKS" OR WHATEVER YOU CALL THEM WHEN YOU'RE TALKING WITH AUNT ANNALISE.
SAVE ME...
≷SIGH≶
...IRON SHOGUN.
EH.
FEAR NOT, MOTHER.
I'M HERE TO SAVE YOU FROM THE GRASP OF THESE FOUL CREATURES.
LOOK OUT, IRON SHOGUN.
THE ONI QUEEN'S MINIONS WANT TO EAT YOUR FACE.


INHALE


EXHALE

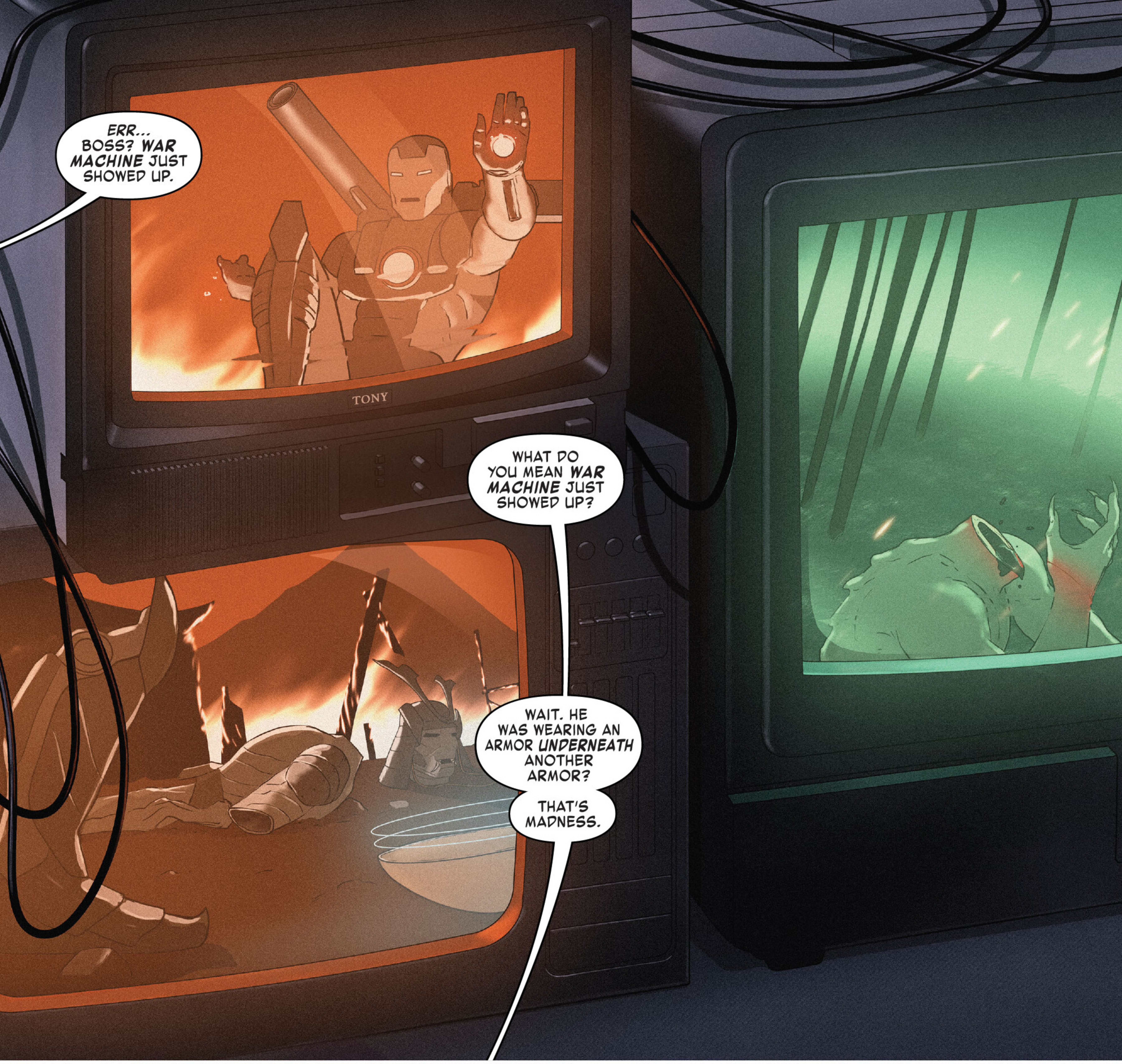

FEAR NOT, MOTHER.
I'M HERE TO SAVE YOU FROM THE GRASP OF THESE FOUL CREATURES.

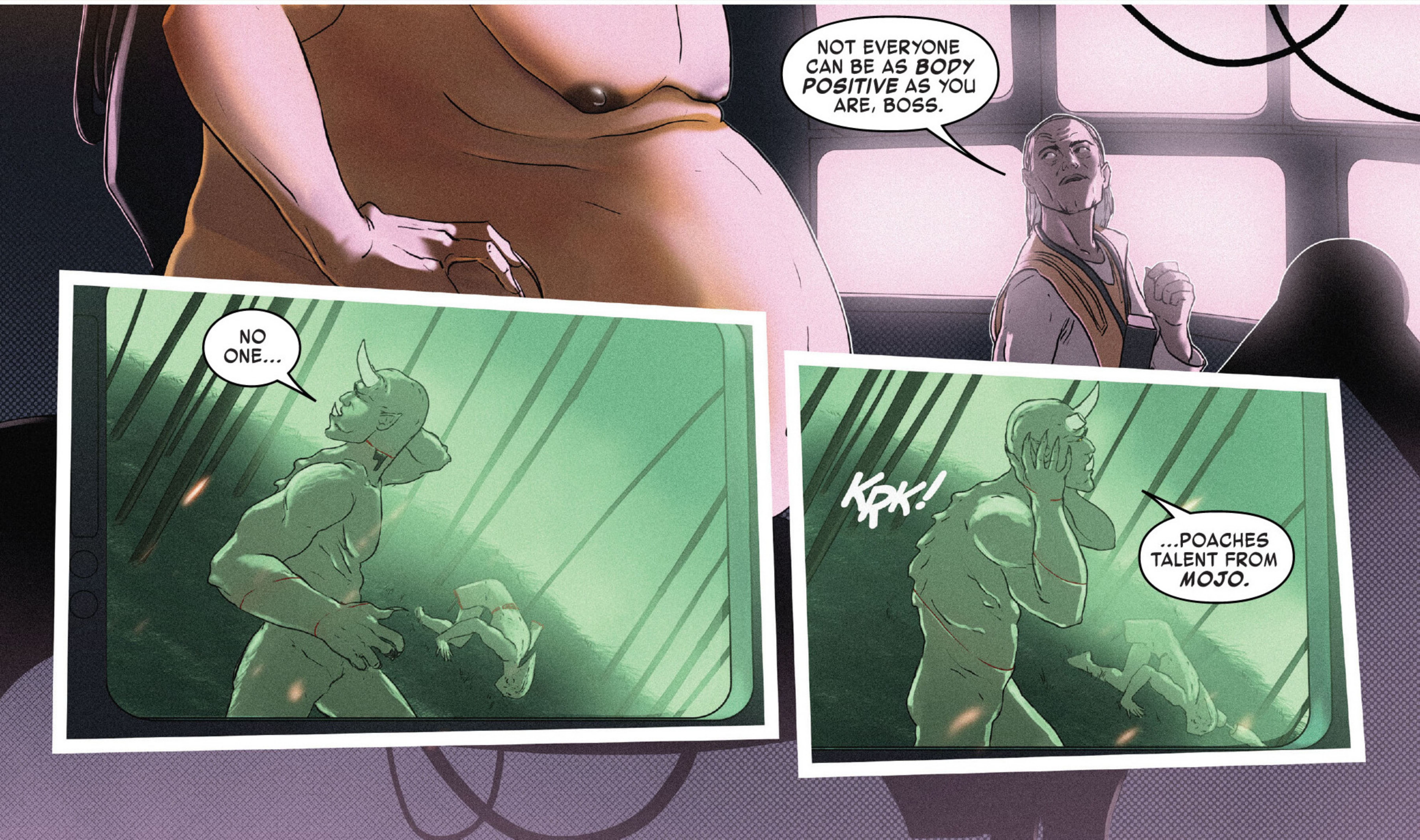


NOW FACE ME...
...ONI QUEEN.
TICKLE!
TICKLE!
MOM, STOP! I'M THE **IRON SHOGUN.** I'M SUPPOSED TO RESCUE YOU.
YOU WERE TOO LATE. I'M ALREADY UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE **ONI QUEEN.**
NO! STOP. THAT'S NOT WHAT'S SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN.
YOU ACTUALLY LEAPED AT ME.
YOUR SON DID SAY YOU'D PICK UP ON THE STORY AND KNOW WHEN TO BREAK AWAY FROM IT.
HI. I AM **IRON MAN.** I'M HERE TO RESCUE YOU.
?

NO SIGNAL
ERROR
WHAT?!
WHY IS THE *MOTHER* ATTACKING *IRON SHOGUN?!*
NO! NO!! NO!!! NO!!!! NO!!!!!
THAT'S NOT IN THE #$&% SCRIPT.
NEW TALENT.
CHOMP!
YOU CAN'T TRUST THEM.
WHAT DO WE DO NOW, BOSS?
CALL MY AGENT, KID. TELL HER *MOJO* SENT YA.
MAYBE WE CAN WORK OUT SOME ROYALTY PAYMENTS IN EXCHANGE FOR YOUR MOM HERE.
YOU ACCEPT *KAIJU SNOT* AS CURRENCY ON *EARTH?*
NEVER MIND. WE'LL KEEP THE MONEY FOR YOU TILL YOU'RE *60*, THE LEGAL ADULT AGE ON MOJOWORLD.
BETWEEN YOU AND ME, KID, YOUR MOM'S GOING TO BE A STAR. MAYBE WE'LL HAVE HER PLAY THE LEAD ROLE IN ONE OF HER *STEAMY COMIC BOOKS'* TV ADAPTATIONS.
COMICS ARE ALL THE RAGE NOW, YOU KNOW.
HEAR THIS, *IRON MAN...*
...*NO ONE* POACHES TALENT FROM *MOJO.*

I WANT TO BE A HERO MORE THAN ANYTHING IN THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD, BUT ALL I COULD DO...
SNIFF
...WAS HIDE AND CRY WHEN MY MOM WAS IN TROUBLE.
I COULDN'T SAVE MY MOM, IRON MAN.
AMBULANCE
FIRE DEPT.
IT'S OKAY, BOBBY. MY FRIEND WAR MACHINE AND I WILL FIND AND RESCUE YOUR MOM.
BUT WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOUR HELP.
SNIFF SNIFF
YOU NEED ME?
MORE THAN ANYONE.
AND YOU'RE NOT JUST SAYING THAT BECAUSE YOU'RE TRYING TO BE NICE?
CHUCKLE
I'M NOT JUST SAYING THAT TO BE NICE.
BOBBY. I'VE GOT YOUR MOM.
YOUR SCRIPT WORKED.
HEY, IRON MAN.
HEY, RHODEY.
MOJO'S BOTS ARE ON THEIR WAY HERE. COVER ME WHILE I SHED SOME LAYERS TOO?
MAYBE YOU CAN GIVE ME AN IRON MAN ARMOR AND MAKE ME YOUR SIDEKICK.
HAHA. NICE TRY.
WHOA! WHOA! WHOA! I HAVEN'T EVEN BOUGHT YOU DINNER YET.
DUDE!
SURE.
I'LL COVER YOU.


ERR... BOSS? *WAR MACHINE* JUST SHOWED UP.
TONY
WHAT DO YOU MEAN *WAR MACHINE* JUST SHOWED UP?
WAIT. HE WAS WEARING AN ARMOR *UNDERNEATH* ANOTHER ARMOR?
THAT'S MADNESS.

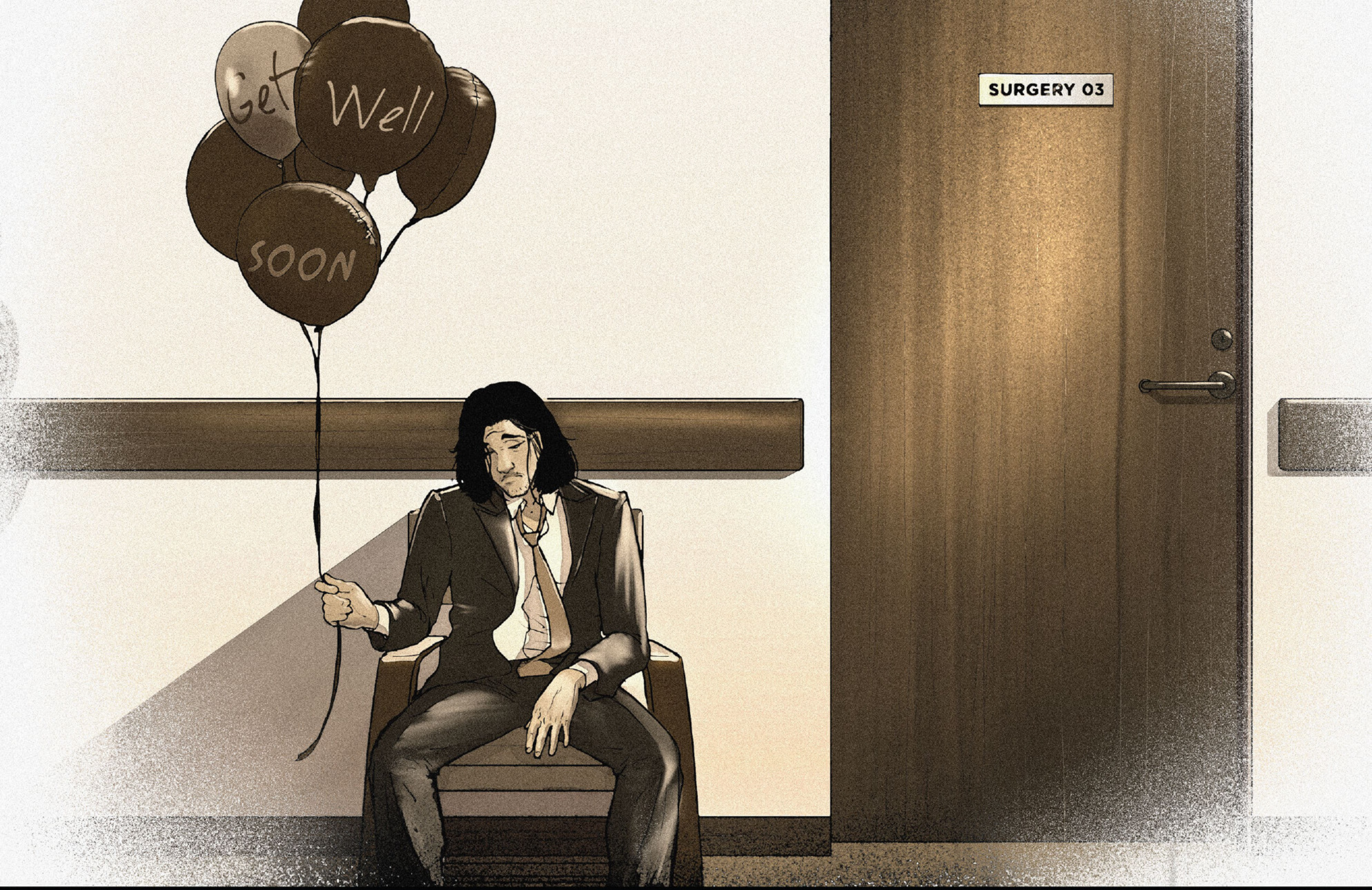

NOT EVERYONE CAN BE AS *BODY POSITIVE* AS YOU ARE, BOSS.
NO ONE...
KRK!
...POACHES TALENT FROM *MOJO.*

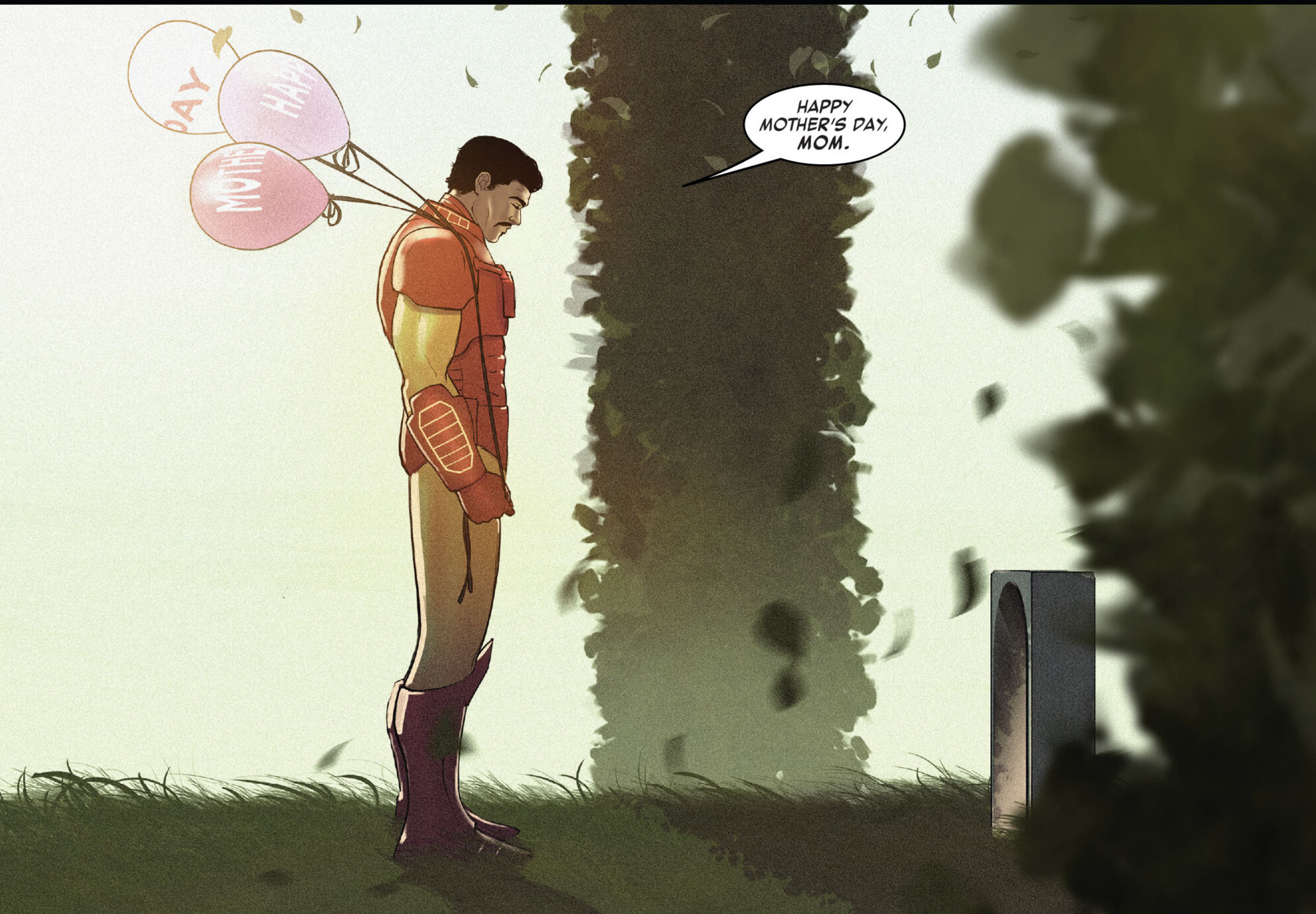
PLEASE, HOLD STILL.
⚡GASP!⚡ YOUR FACE--
THE SHOGUN ARMOR ISN'T JUST FOR SHOW.
NO ONE...
...POACHES TALENT...
...FROM MOJO.
SEE, MOM? I TOLD YOU IRON MAN IS THE BEST.
BOBBY! WE'LL HAVE TO THROW AWAY YOUR X-MEN TOYS WHEN I GET HOME, THEN. NOTHING BUT THE BEST FOR YOU.
HEY NOW, I THINK WE'RE GETTING A LITTLE CARRIED AWAY HERE, MOM.
TELL ME ABOUT IT. YOU KNOW WHAT THOSE THINGS SELL FOR NOW?
ALL RIGHT, MOJO...
...WOULD LOVE TO STAY FOR THE AFTER-PARTY, BUT WE KIND OF PREFER OUR PARTIES WITHOUT NAKED GUYS WHO ARE PRONE TO KIDNAPPING.
NOT AS MUCH FUN AS YOU WOULD THINK.

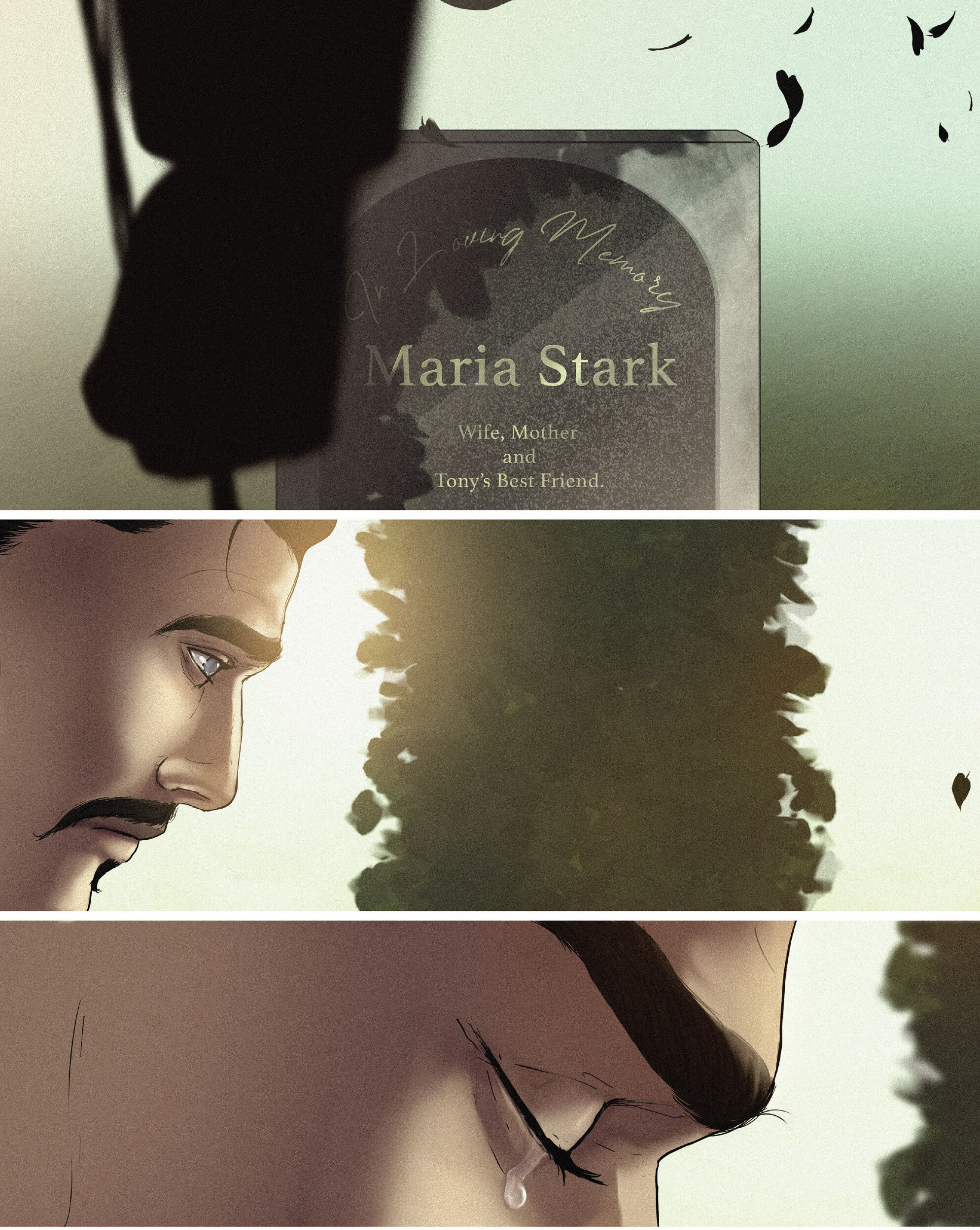
DID YOU *GET* ALL THAT?
YES, WE DID, BOSS.
THE INVINCIBLE IRON MAN
OOF! THAT TINGLES ALL THE RIGHT SPOTS.
WHAT A CLOSING LINE. THE THEATRICS. A TRUE THESPIAN-- *IRON MAN.*
OUR BOX-OFFICE NUMBERS ARE GOING THROUGH THE ROOF.
EVERYONE LOVES *IRON MAN.*
HA!!! WE HAVE TO DO THIS AGAIN.
MAYBE ONE MORE TIME--NO, *TWO MORE* TIMES--WITH *IRON MAN.* THEN WE KEEP ADDING MORE AND MORE HEROES FROM *EARTH* AND MAYBE SOME *NOT* FROM EARTH.
WE'LL MAKE A *LOT* OF MONEY.
UM...
...WON'T THE AUDIENCE EVENTUALLY GET TIRED OF OUR CONTENT IF WE OVERDO IT, BOSS?
ARE YOU KIDDING ME?

"THE AUDIENCE WILL NEVER GET TIRED OF STORIES ABOUT HEROES."
I MISSED YOU, MOM.
I MISSED YOU TOO, BOBBY.

"ANTHONY."
TONY.
TONY STARK.
YOU DON'T KNOW IT YET, KID, BUT YOU JUST HIT THE JACKPOT.
"AND THE PRIZE...
"...IS THIS WOMAN'S *COMPLETE* AND *UNWAVERING* LOVE."


Get
Well
SOON
SURGERY 03


DAY
HAPP
MOTHE
HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY, MOM.


In Loving Memory
Maria Stark
Wife, Mother
and
Tony's Best Friend.

End.

JUANN CABAL & TRÍONA FARRELL

#1 VARIANT

4

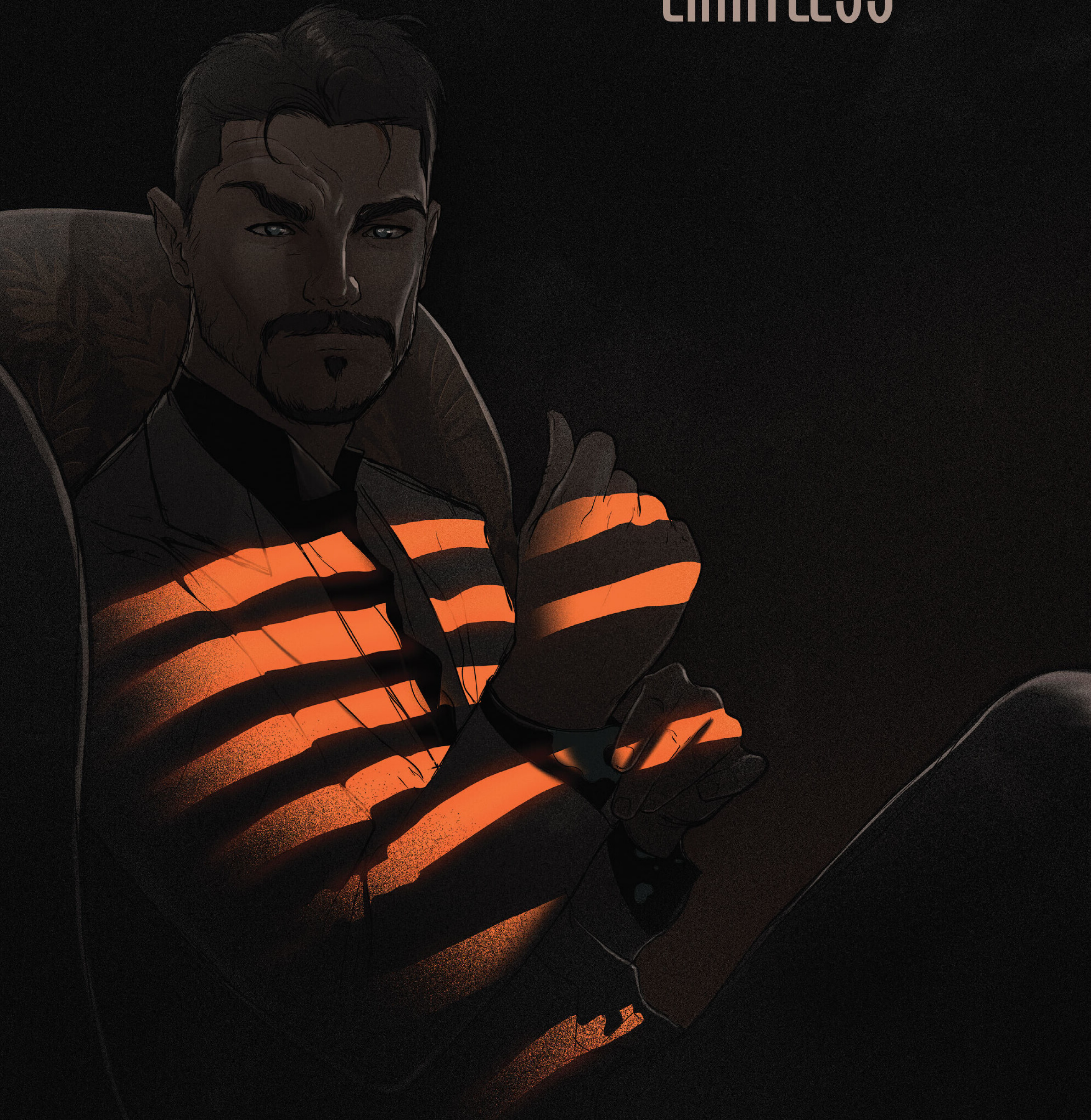
THIS IS...
...STRANGE.
Munch!
Slurp
JUDGING FROM THE FACT THAT NO ONE IS *RUNNING AWAY SCREAMING*...
...COUPLED WITH YOUR *UNDIVIDED* ATTENTION ON YOUR *CHOW MEIN*...
...I'M GUESSING YOU *DON'T SEE* THAT.

GREENWICH VILLAGE.
NEW YORK CITY.
THERE ARE PHANTOM SQUIDS MATING RIGHT WHERE YOU'RE SEATED.
ANOTHER GARGOYLE DIES.
A WEREWOLF AND TWO DARK ELVES SHARE A FORBIDDEN KISS.
SHOW-OFF.
SO YOU'LL HAVE TO BE A LITTLE MORE SPECIFIC ABOUT THE "THAT" I'M SUPPOSED TO SEE.
IF YOU HAVE TO ASK, THEN YOU CAN'T SEE IT.
HOW ABOUT YOU?
DO YOU SEE IT?
A DAY LATER.
NO.
A DAY LATER.
NO.

A DAY LATER.
YOU PICKING UP ANYTHING WITH YOUR *SPIDER-SENSE?*
IRON MAN
THWIP
NO.
CAN I LEAVE NOW?
A DAY LATER.
I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN YOU WOULD ONE DAY GROW *MAD* WITH SOMETHING. I HAD ASSUMED *POWER.* BUT I FORGOT *PARANOIA* WAS ALSO A PLAUSIBLE OPTION.
...
STEP INSIDE AND LET'S FIGURE OUT WHAT'S GOT YOU SO WORKED UP.

I AM...
IRON MAN

CHAPTER FOUR:
LIMITLESS



S.H.I.E.L.D. HELICARRIER.
SOMEWHERE ABOVE THE ARCTIC SEA.
YOU STILL DON'T SEE ANYTHING STRANGE?
OKAY, YOU NEED TO STOP THAT!
AND...NO. NOT A THING.
CHAINS? SHACKLES...?
NO.
MAYBE I HAVE AN UNEXPLORED BONDAGE KINK.
UNEXPLORED?
YOU FORGET I'VE MET ONE OF YOUR EXES.

BIO
THEY SAY, "NEVER MEET YOUR HEROES."
BUT "NEVER LET YOUR DOCTOR DATE YOUR EX" SEEMS LIKE A MUCH MORE IMPORTANT CODE TO LIVE BY.
PULL
ZIP
04
I'M NOT--
"--YOUR DOCTOR."
"NEVER LET YOUR TEAMMATE, WHOSE NAME IS DOCTOR STRANGE BUT ISN'T REALLY YOUR DOCTOR ANYMORE, DATE YOUR EX" DOESN'T ROLL OFF THE TONGUE AS WELL, NOW DOES IT?
PULL
STEEL YOURSELF.
POKE
AH. GOOD ONE.
OUCH!
EXPOSED BLOOD DETECTED.
...
ANALYZING...
ANALYSIS COMPLETE.
RECOGNIZED: S.H.I.E.L.D. DIRECTOR TONY STARK.

KLAK
KLAK
KLAK
STEP AWAY FROM THE DIRECTOR, OR YOU WILL BE OBLITERATED.
KLAK
YOUR SYSTEM DISAPPOINTS ME, TONY.
IT FAILS TO RECOGNIZE THE SORCERER SUPREME OF THIS WORLD AND THE FUTILITY OF ITS ATTEMPT TO... "OBLITERATE" HIM.
EVEN IN THE FACE OF IMPOSSIBLE OPPOSITION, STRANGE, IT IS IN HUMAN DNA TO DREAM.
HELLO, D.E.E.D.E.E.
OVERRIDE CODE: D-X-T-R.
HELLO, DIRECTOR STARK.
SET LABORATORY ACCESS MODE TO "LEVEL UNHINGED."
UNRAVELING LABORATORY'S HIDDEN CHAMBERS.
SUSPENDING SECURITY LIMITERS.
YOU CAN NOW WORK WITH A 95% LESS CHANCE OF SOMETHING ATTEMPTING TO UNALIVE YOU.
?
OPEN!

Pending...
Delta wing
Flight deck
Body flap
Main propulsion engine
Main propulsion engine
Main gear
Side hatch
Low pressure turbines
WELCOME TO LEVEL UNHINGED.
RATERRESTRIAL
03
NORGA
01/09/63
IT'S LIKE FINDING THE ALCOHOL STASH OF YOUR SUPPOSEDLY SOBER FRIEND.
I'M THE NEW DIRECTOR OF S.H.I.E.L.D., STRANGE.
Shuk
I AM IRON MAN.
IT'S WHAT I DO.
I BUILD. I CAN'T HELP MYSELF.
THIS IRON SPIDER ARMOR DID A LOT OF GOOD IN SPIDER-MAN'S HANDS.
WHILE THESE OTHER ARMORS LOOK LIKE THEY WERE PUT TOGETHER TO RIP APART OUR TEAMMATES THOR AND HULK...
...RATHER THAN DO "A LOT OF GOOD" IN THEIR HANDS.
OF ALL THE "HEROES" OF EARTH, YOU'VE KNOWN ABOUT THANOS THE LONGEST.
HE HAS COMMITTED GREAT ATROCITIES ON MANY WORLDS INCLUDING OUR OWN.
TELL ME, TONY, HOW MANY "THANOSBUSTERS" HAVE YOU BUILT TO STOP HIM?
IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE AND PERFECTLY REASONABLE TO HAVE CONTINGENCY PLANS, BUT YOU HAVE BECOME FAR BETTER AT FACING OFF AGAINST FELLOW AVENGERS THAN ACTUAL VILLAINS. AND I BELIEVE IT IS EATING YOU UP ON THE INSIDE...
...TO THE DEGREE THAT ALL YOU SEE AROUND YOU NOW ARE MONSTERS.
THIS SPELL, WHEN COMPLETE, WILL ALLOW ME TO SEE WITH YOUR EYES.
TELL ME... WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY WILL SEE WHEN I LOOK AT YOU?

YABA.
LAGOS CITY.
DO NOT C
TOOK THREE WEEKS TO FIND THE BODY.
VICTIM HAD BEEN *"ACTING PARANOID,"* SO FRIENDS AND CO-WORKERS ASSUMED THAT HE WENT INTO HIDING.
HE DIED ALONE.
...ALONE WITH THE MURDERER ANYWAY.
THE VICTIM'S SPECIES DOESN'T DECOMPOSE EASILY. WE HAD TO FIND OTHER MEANS OF DATING THE TIME OF DEMISE.
THEY MUST HAVE EVOLVED TO POSSESS SOME SORT OF A *HEALING FACTOR,* SO IT'S PERFECTLY NORMAL THAT THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF PHYSICAL TRAUMA.
HOWEVER, SCANS SHOW THAT *VITAL* ORGANS ARE MISSING. THE KILLER MUST HAVE TAKEN THEM TO MAKE SURE THE VICTIM WOULD STAY DEAD EVEN AFTER THE VICTIM'S BODY HEALED ITSELF.
WE CAN *RETRIEVE* **STEM CELLS** FROM THE BODY AND GROW **NEW ORGANS** IN A LAB, MARIA.
WITH HIS HEALING FACTOR, MAYBE WE CAN STILL SAVE HIM.
THE VICTIM'S *BRAIN* IS ONE OF THE MISSING VITAL ORGANS.
HE'S *DEAD,* SIR.
WHY AM I REALLY HERE, **HILL?**

THIS IS THE FIFTH SIMILAR MURDER CASE IN THE PAST TWO MONTHS.
THE VICTIMS HAVE ALL BEEN EXTRATERRESTRIAL IMMIGRANTS.
ALL LEGAL IMMIGRANTS.
ALL PROCESSED BY S.H.I.E.L.D.
ALL WITH RESIDENCES PERSONALLY ASSIGNED BY YOU, SIR.
PLEASE, AT EASE.
OKAY.
WE'RE ALONE IN HERE, TONY.
S.H.I.E.L.D. GUYS ARE COMING UP WITH STORIES THAT DON'T LOOK GOOD FOR YOU.
HELP US OUT WITH THAT BIG BRAIN OF YOURS.
WHAT DOES ANY OF THIS MEAN TO YOU?

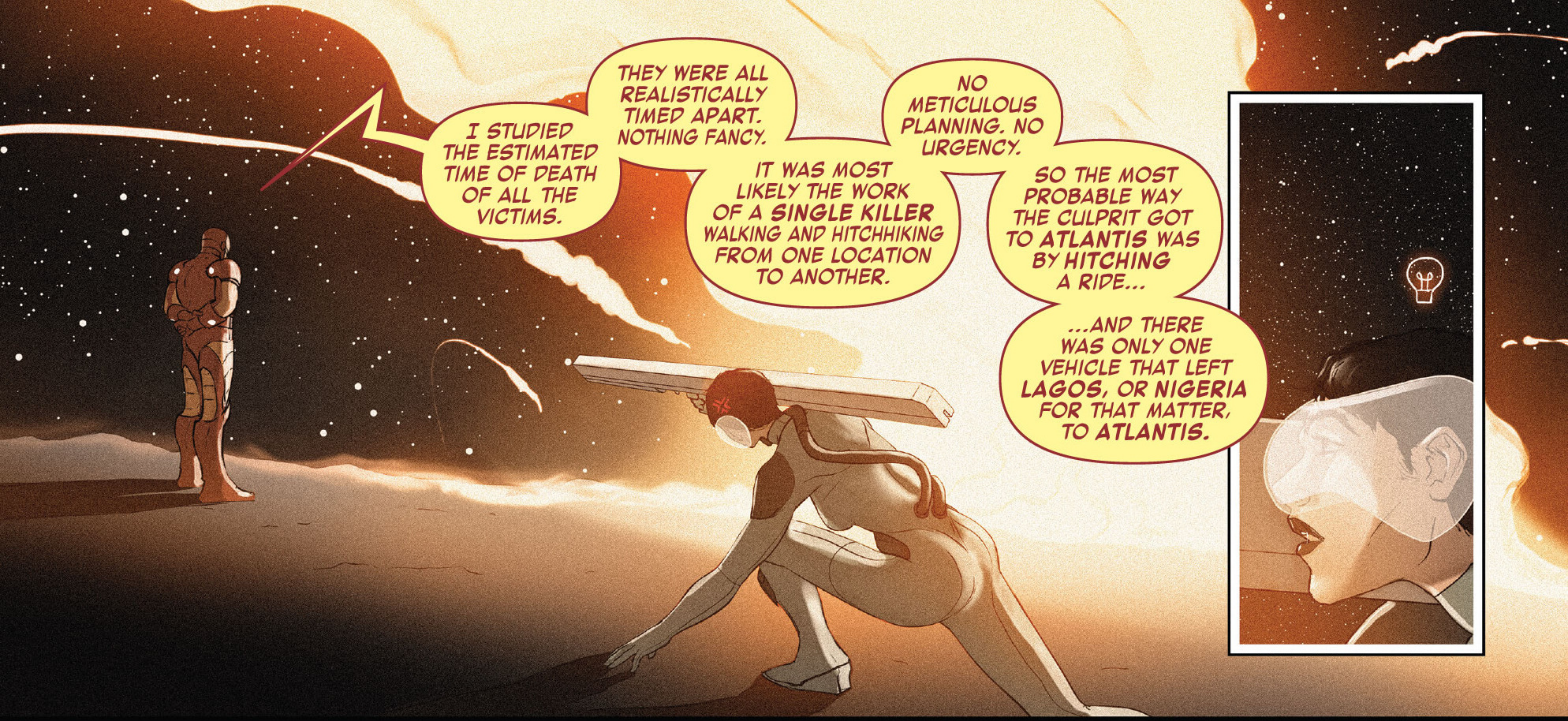
"WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO STOP A POSSIBLE MURDER.
"SOMEONE IS KILLING EARTH'S EXTRATERRESTRIAL IMMIGRANTS...
"...BUT ONLY THOSE WHO WERE PROCESSED BY ME.
"I'VE BEEN COMPROMISED."
OUR DESTINATION IS TWO HOURS AWAY-- HOW MANY MORE TIMES ARE YOU GOING TO REPEAT THAT LINE?
WE AGREED ON FOUR.
ONCE EVERY THIRTY MINUTES.
GOOD.
YOU REMEMBER STILL.
YEAH, BUT...
...IF THE CULPRIT HAS ACCESS TO MY MIND OR BODY, THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THEY DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO MY MEMORIES AS WELL.
AND IF THEY HAVE ACCESS TO MY MEMORIES, THEY'LL KEEP PASSING THESE TESTS.
POINT. BUT IF YOU'RE THE CULPRIT, THIS IS THE IDEAL SITUATION-- A GUN TO YOUR HEAD.
IF YOUR "MIND OR BODY" IS BEING MANIPULATED REMOTELY, WE'LL HAVE A ROUGH ESTIMATE OF WHEN IT HAPPENS. YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO PASS THESE TESTS DURING SUCH PERIODS.
IF THE CULPRIT HAS ACCESS TO YOUR MEMORIES, FIGURING OUT WHO THE PUPPETEER IS BECOMES MUCH MORE COMPLEX, BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD TO PLAY A DIFFERENT CARD IF THIS IS THE ONLY SCENARIO WE CAN'T ACCOUNT FOR YET.

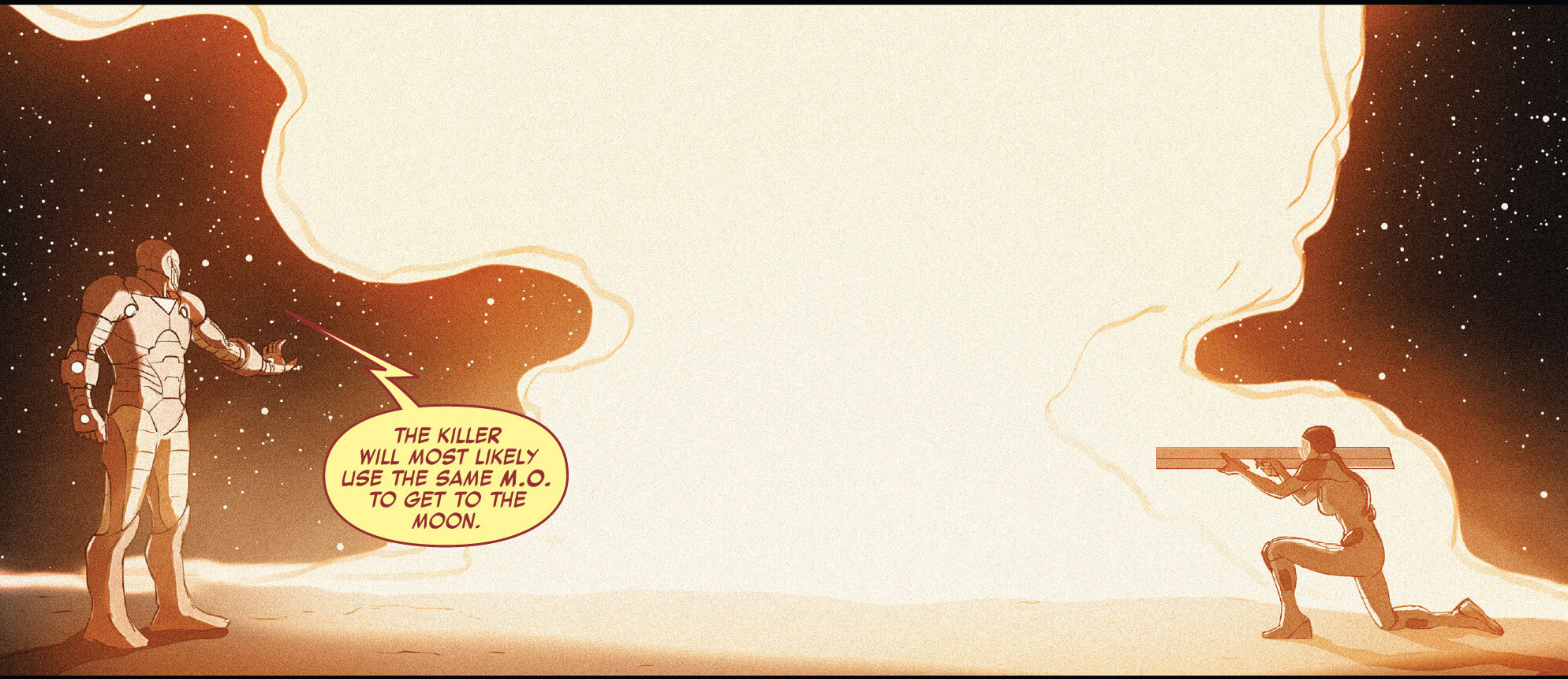
TONY.
ABOUT THESE *GIANT DEMONS* YOU'VE BEEN SEEING...
...HOW BIG ARE THEY REALLY?
ATLANTIS.
SOMEWHERE BENEATH THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.

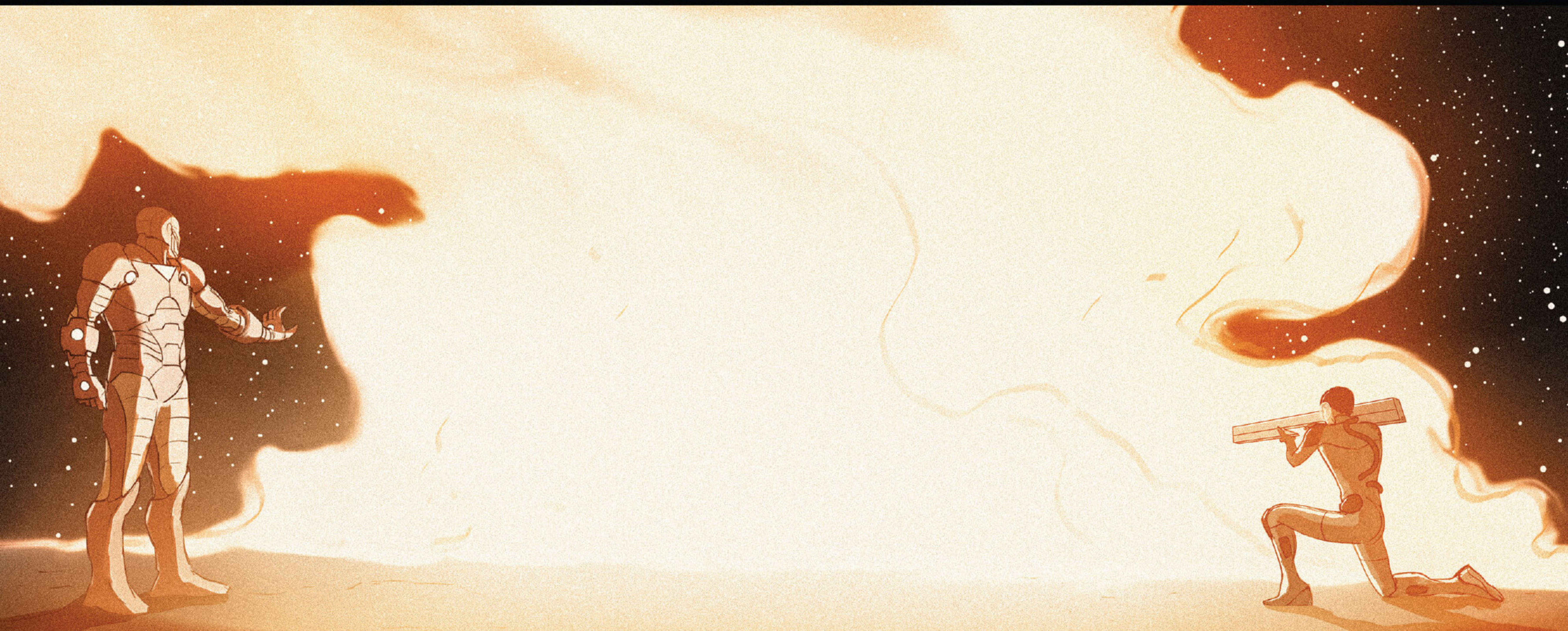
THEY LOST TOO MUCH BLOOD.
I'M SORRY, BUT WE COULDN'T SAVE THEM.
THE KILLER MUST HAVE GOTTEN TO THEM WHILE WE WERE AT THE IMMIGRATION OFFICE.
WE COULD HAVE SAVED THEM IF WE GOT HERE JUST A FEW MINUTES EARLIER?
IT'S NOT THAT STRAIGHTFORWARD. BUT, YES. THEIR CHANCES OF SURVIVAL WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH GREATER IF WE HAD GOTTEN HERE EARLIER.
RELEASE THE LEECHES.
LET'S CLEAN UP THE BLOOD BEFORE IT ESCAPES THE APARTMENT.
IF THERE'S A CHANCE THE KILLER MAY STILL BE IN ATLANTIS, WE SHOULD CALL FOR A TOTAL LOCKDOWN.
THE BUREAUCRACY IN ATLANTIS DWARFS THE AMERICAN DMVS.
WE'RE LEAVING.
IMMEDIATELY.
YOU'RE A S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT NOW, TONY--THE DIRECTOR.
AND PROTOCOL DICTATES THAT WE LOOK INTO THE EVIDENCE LEFT BEHIND AND CONTAIN THE THREAT IF IT IS STILL HERE.
INTANGIBILITY, SUPER-SPEED, TELEPORTATION.
THOSE ARE JUST EXAMPLES OF ABILITIES THE KILLER MAY HAVE, HILL.
I'M NOT WILLING TO WASTE TIME WITH A LOCKDOWN.
I KNOW WHERE THE LAST IMMIGRANTS ARE, AND I CAN'T AFFORD TO BE "A FEW MINUTES" TOO LATE AGAIN.
I'VE LOST ALL INTEREST IN CATCHING A MURDERER.

"I JUST WANT TO SAVE LIVES."
D.E.E.D.E.E.?
YES, DIRECTOR STARK.
YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO?
YES, DIRECTOR STARK.
CHARTING COURSE...
APPROACHING SEA LEVEL...
VELOCITY HAS BEEN INCREASED AS WE APPROACH THE STRATOSPHERE...
DIRECTOR STARK, WE ARE NOW ESCAPING THE EXOSPHERE...

WELCOME TO...
BLUE AREA OF THE MOON.
THE OXYGEN-RICH ENVIRONMENT.
THE LAST OF THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL IMMIGRANTS I PROCESSED CHOSE TO STAY ON OUR MOON.
THEY ARE BUILDERS WHO PREFER SOLELY EACH OTHER'S COMPANY.
ONLY TONY STARK KNOWS THEIR EXACT LOCATION.
D.E.E.D.E.E?
YES, DIRECTOR STARK.
INITIATE SELF-DESTRUCT SEQUENCE.
?
#$%&!
I PROGRAMMED THE SELF-DESTRUCT SEQUENCE TO BE INSTANTANEOUS, SUDDEN AND LOUD.
ONES WITH COUNTDOWNS NEVER SEEM TO GET THE JOB DONE.
YOU'RE...
KOFF
...THE KILLER, TONY.


I STUDIED THE ESTIMATED TIME OF DEATH OF ALL THE VICTIMS.
THEY WERE ALL REALISTICALLY TIMED APART. NOTHING FANCY.
IT WAS MOST LIKELY THE WORK OF A **SINGLE KILLER** WALKING AND HITCHHIKING FROM ONE LOCATION TO ANOTHER.
NO METICULOUS PLANNING. NO URGENCY.
SO THE MOST PROBABLE WAY THE CULPRIT GOT TO **ATLANTIS** WAS BY **HITCHING** A RIDE...
...AND THERE WAS ONLY ONE VEHICLE THAT LEFT **LAGOS**, OR **NIGERIA** FOR THAT MATTER, TO **ATLANTIS.**


THE KILLER WILL MOST LIKELY USE THE SAME M.O. TO GET TO THE MOON.



TONY STARK. I'VE COME FOR YOUR--
HEY, STARK.
I'VE DISCOVERED WHY YOU'VE BEEN HAVING VISIONS OF GIANT DEMONS ACROSS--
AND, OF COURSE, YOU ALREADY KILLED IT.
THEY WANT TO BE KILLED, TONY.
YOU WERE INFECTED BY WHAT'S CALLED "THE KEY." THE KEY FINDS OUT WHAT YOU LOVE THE MOST, WHAT YOU ARE MOST PROUD OF... ANYTHING OF STRONG EMOTIONAL WORTH.
AND THE LOCK DESTROYS IT... RUTHLESSLY.
EMOTIONALLY UNSTABLE, YOU FALL FOR THE TRAP, AND YOU KILL THE LOCK...
...YOU "OPEN THE LOCK."
TO WHAT?

"AN INVASION."
STOP
90
I WONDER HOW I CAUGHT A *MYSTIC* INFECTION.
SURE.
THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS.
ARE WE DONE PRETENDING THAT *TONY* DIDN'T GET IT FROM ONE OF YOUR *"BRO LUNCHES"*?
WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME.
DO WE CALL ON THE *AVENGERS?*
MOST OF THEM ARE NOT MY BIGGEST FANS RIGHT NOW.
STRANGE?
...
AM I STILL INFECTED WITH THIS... "KEY"?

D.O.M.E.
DESTROYER OF MYSTIC ENERGY
BY THE CHAINS OF KRAKKAN AND THE CRIMSON BANDS OF CYTTORAK...
...DETURBARE!
AAARGH!
MISTER STARK SAYS YOU SHOULD PUT "THE KEY" IN THERE.
AND DON'T LEAVE BEHIND ANY OF YOUR OWN MYSTIC ENERGY.
OR ELSE, YOU'LL REGRET IT.
THE CANNON SHATTERS A COSMIC CUBE IN ITS POWER SOURCE CHAMBER.
THE RESULTANT BURST OF ENERGY IS FORCED TO OSCILLATE IN REVERSE PATTERN OF THE SAMPLE MYSTIC ENERGY PUT INTO THAT SLOT.
IF YOUR INVADERS HAVE THE SAME ENERGY SIGNATURE AS THE KEY...
"...THEY WILL BE OBLITERATED."

A WEAPON THAT USES THE ALMOST INFINITE POWER OF A COSMIC CUBE TO *CANCEL OUT* MYSTICAL ENERGY.
IF I HAD LEFT A PART OF MY SPELL IN THAT CONTRAPTION--
TONY, IS THIS YOUR *"STRANGEBUSTER"?*
...
YOU TRULY HAVE *NO LIMIT,* TONY STARK.
MISTER STARK.
YOUR *FRIEND* IS *NOT* PLEASED.
SHOULD WE--
--SHOULD WE DESTROY THE WEAPON?
NO.

5

SUDAN.
NOW.
MISTER STARK.
WAKE UP, MISTER STARK.
CONSCIOUSNESS-BACKUP SYSTEM IS OFFLINE.
DEADLY IMPACT IS IMMINENT...
...AND FOREIGN THREAT REMAINS ON THE MOVE.
YOU NEED TO WAKE UP, MISTER STARK.
YOU NEED TO WAKE UP, OR YOU WILL--
...
...
...
ELECTRICAL DEFIBRILLATION IN PROGRESS.
SENDING TWO HUNDRED JOULES OF ELECTRICITY THROUGH YOUR HEART...
...NOW.
KZZTT
YOU'RE AWAKE.
K.A.T.I.E., SWITCH REPULSOR LEVEL TO "LETHAL."
STAT.
THUD
THUD
THUD

"IRON MAN."
ARE YOU THE ONE THEY CALL "IRON MAN"?
BLAM
BRACE YOURSELF, PROTECTOR.
BLAM
YOUR END IS HERE.

CHOOOOOOOOM
NO.

I AM...
IRON MAN

CHAPTER FIVE:
THE REAL IRON MAN

THE CUBE.
(CORRECTIONAL FACILITY FOR SUPERHUMAN CRIMINALS.) THREE MONTHS AGO.
THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, MISTER STARK.
YOU'RE GOING TO DIE.
YOUR ARMOR IS MADE OF METAL, NO?
SOME PARTS OF IT ARE.
THEN YOUR DEATH IS CERTAIN.
YOU ARE SCISSORS. SHE IS ROCK.
BUT ORDERS ARE ORDERS.
I WILL TAKE YOU TO SEE HER.
-5
...
YOU HOST A LOT OF TACO TUESDAYS, GEORGE?
-10
NO.
BUT EVERY WEDNESDAY IS WORKOUT WEDNESDAY.
YOUR GUYS MUST REALLY LOVE THEIR WORKOUTS.
IT IS NOT ME THEY SALUTE, MISTER STARK.
YOU ARE A BIG CELEBRITY HERE.

MOST PEOPLE *DON'T GET IT.*
ACE METAL OBJECTS HERE.
PRISON IS *HARDER* WHEN YOU ARE SUPERHUMAN.
NORMAL PRISON IS ROUGH ENOUGH. FOR SUPERHUMANS, WE ARE *SEDATED* OR *FORCED* TO WEAR *COLLARS* LIKE *DOGS* SO THAT WE ARE MORE...
...MANAGEABLE.
YOUR LOBBYING TO MAKE THE *CUBE* A PRISON *WITHOUT POWER-DAMPENING COLLARS* OR *SEDATED CONVICTS* SHOWS THAT *YOU GET IT.*
ACE METAL OBJECTS HERE.

TIE
DO I STILL GET THE **AVENGER OF THE YEAR AWARD** IF I SAY I'VE HAD THAT PLAN FOR MONTHS NOW, BUT I DON'T REMEMBER PULLING THE TRIGGER ON IT?
YOU ARE A BUSY MAN. AND YOUR--
PULL
WAIT!
WHAT'S THE MALLET FOR?
⋛CHUCKLES⋚
I BELIEVE IN BASIC SUPERHUMAN RIGHTS, BUT ***SHE*** IS STILL A ***DIRTY CRIMINAL*** WHO TRIED TO KILL ***SPIDER-MAN*** AND SENT TWO OF MY BEST PEOPLE TO HOSPITAL.
WRONG MOVE?
I CLOBBER.
...
I KID. I KID.
CLOWNS. BIG SHOES, YES?
ME? BIG HAMMER.
SHE LAUGHS. I LAUGH. WE ALL LAUGH.
BETTER TO CARRY ***MALLET.***
SAY YOUR PRAYERS NOW, ***MISTER STARK.***
WE ARE CLOSE TO WHERE ***SHE'S*** BEING KEPT.

DEOLA.
IRON MAN.
EMPHASIS ON THE WORD, "IRON," I SEE.
IT SEEMED LIKE YOU NEEDED REMINDING.
SO...
...WHY SHOULDN'T I TURN YOU INTO SLUSH, BIG MAN?
YOU'RE THE SECOND-BEST MECHANIC I KNOW, AND YOU WANT TO PUT THAT ABILITY OF YOURS TO GOOD USE OUTSIDE OF PRISON. HECK, YOU'D LOVE TO DO ANYTHING OUTSIDE OF PRISON. BUT YOU'D DEFINITELY KILL TO WORK WITH THE BEST MECHANIC YOU KNOW.
I'M THE BEST MECHANIC I KNOW.
SURE.
...
AND YES, I PAY...
...REALLY WELL.
I'M HEARING A LOT ABOUT WHY I NEED YOU...
...NOT A LOT ABOUT WHY YOU NEED ME.
I'M TONY STARK.
WHY DO YOU THINK?
WE'RE BUILDING A BIG WEAPON.

BY THE WAY, HOW'S THE FOOD HERE?
"HOW'S THE FOOD HERE?" WHAT SORT OF QUESTION IS THAT?
DUDE, IT'S *PRISON FOOD.*
WOW! GREAT CONTEXT FOR SOMEONE WHO'S...
...NEVER BEEN IN PRISON!
HEY! KEEP IT IN YOUR IRON PANTS.
MANY HEROES HAVE BEEN IN PRISON BEFORE. *YOU'VE* THROWN SOME IN YOURSELF.
AND I'M PRETTY SURE YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT PRISON FOOD SUCKS.
REALLY?
I COULD HAVE SWORN THE FOOD HERE WAS (HOW DO YOU SAY IT?) "BUSSIN'."
WHY WOULD YOU THINK THAT?
IF YOU DIDN'T LOVE PRISON FOOD SO MUCH, YOU WOULDN'T BE TRYING TO CRUSH MY ARMOR WITH YOUR POWERS.
#$%&!
SO, YOU DIDN'T, LIKE, DRUG ME OR SOMETHING TO GET MY POWERS TO NOT WORK ON YOU?
EXIT
WHEN YOU'VE FOUGHT **OMEGA-LEVEL MUTANTS** WHO CAN CONTROL METAL IN THEIR SLEEP AND CRAZY SCIENTISTS WHO TRY TO EXPLOIT THE ELECTROMAGNETIC PROPERTIES OF YOUR ARMOR'S COMPONENTS, YOU LEARN TO INCORPORATE COUNTERMEASURES INTO YOUR BUILDS.
BUILDER TO BUILDER.
WHAT'S THE DEAL? WHY CAN'T I CONTROL YOUR ARMOR?
TRANSISTORS.
SIGH
YOU'RE NOT SHAPING UP TO BE A VERY LIKABLE PERSON.

OOF!
THIS CAN GO A WHOLE LOT SMOOTHER IF YOU WOULD JUST STAND DOWN, STARK.
YOU KNOW THE DRILL.
CHOOOO
I'M SORRY, TONY.
IT ENDS HERE.
SMASH
MISTER STARK!!!
SHE-HULK?

!
WHAM
KRUSH
I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT TO YOU NOW, BUT THIS IS A *S.H.I.E.L.D.* OPERATION.
PLEASE STAY BACK.
HILL, I'M GOING TO NEED YOU TO--
CHOOOM
I'M SORRY TOO FOR MAKING ***YOU*** AND ***HILL*** DO THIS.
IT'LL BE OVER QUICKLY.
RELOAD THE CANNON.
ON IT, MA'AM.
RUN
RUN
RUN
RUN
THANKS FOR THE HELP, ***GEORGE.***
WE'VE GOT THIS.

CRASH!
H!
CRASH
DOES THIS HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE WEAPON YOU WANT TO BUILD WITH ME?
NAH. THIS IS SOMETHING ELSE.
WANT TO HELP ME WRAP THIS UP?
TAKING DOWN S.H.I.E.L.D. LIKE THIS, YOU WON'T HAVE TO WONDER WHAT PRISON FOOD TASTES LIKE ANYMORE.
TRY NOT TO HURT ANYONE.
BUT DON'T HOLD BACK.
THEIR SECRET WEAPON IS STILL ACTIVE...
...AND ON ITS WAY.
CRASH!

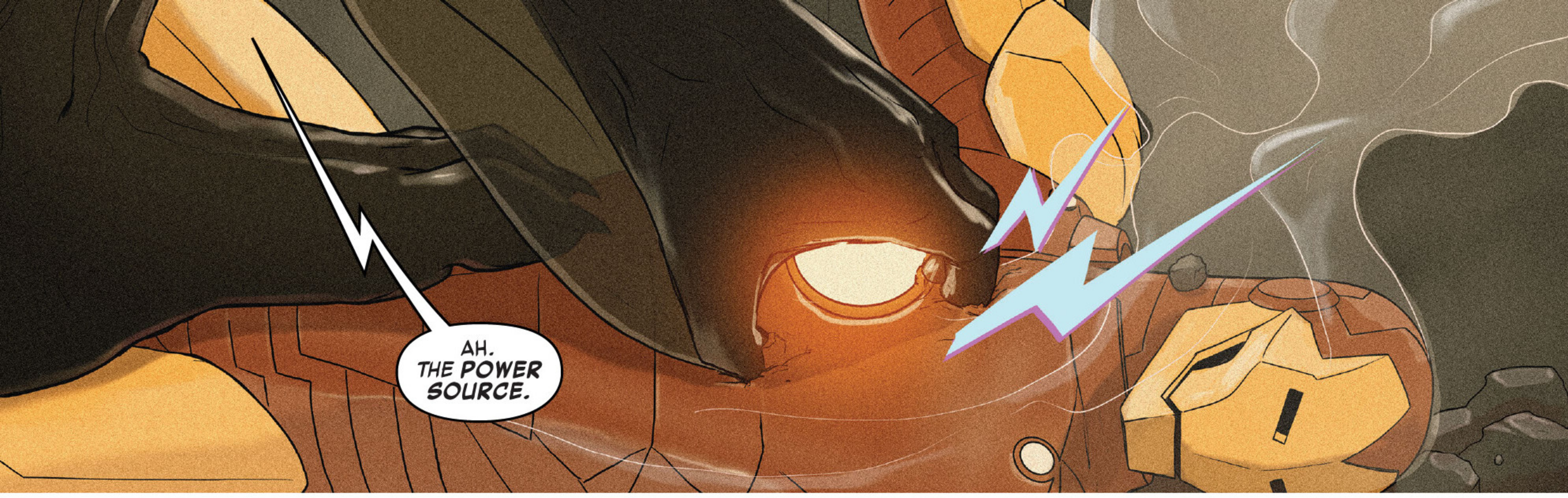
HOW?
WHEN GEORGE TOLD ME THAT TONY STARK MADE THE CUBE A BETTER PRISON AND I COULDN'T REMEMBER SIGNING OFF ON IT, I KNEW TO EXPECT YOU.
I IMMEDIATELY CREATED A FIELD OF DATA PACKETS AROUND ME.
THE CLOSER TO ME YOU FLEW, THE MORE OF THOSE DATA PACKETS YOUR ARMOR DOWNLOADED, AND THE FASTER THOSE PACKETS ASSEMBLED IN YOUR COMPUTING SYSTEM AS A VIRUS OF MY DESIGN.
A VIRUS THAT HIJACKED THE LIFE SUPPORT IN YOUR ARMOR AND TURNED IT AGAINST YOU.
LOADING
TONY STARK COULD FIGHT ALL HIS BATTLES REMOTELY IF HE WANTED TO. BUT HE LOVES TO GET HIS HANDS DIRTY.
IT'S OUR GREATEST STRENGTH. IT'S ALSO OUR BIGGEST WEAKNESS.
YOU DIED THE MOMENT YOU DECIDED TO COME HERE TO FIGHT ME.
0% MEMORIES SYNCHRONIZED
WAIT, WHAT?!
DID WE...? SORRY, SCRATCH THAT.
DID YOU JUST SAY YOU KILLED TONY STARK?
I AM TONY STARK.
I AM IRON MAN.
I'M ALSO AN AVENGER, AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D., GUARDIAN OF THE GALAXY AND THE LIST GOES ON.
3% MEMORIES SYNCHRONIZED
10% MEMORIES SYNCHRONIZED
I'M CONSTANTLY EXPOSED TO DANGEROUS SITUATIONS. PROBABILITY DICTATES I'M DESTINED TO HAVE MY BUTT HANDED TO ME OCCASIONALLY. AND WHEN YOU'RE A LOWLY MORTAL HUMAN WHO WRESTLES WITH GODS AND TITANS, THAT MEANS YOU DIE...A LOT.
WHEN THAT HAPPENS, I HAVE A CONSCIOUSNESS-BACKUP SYSTEM THAT SWIFTLY UPLOADS MY CONSCIOUSNESS AND MEMORIES INTO A CLONE.

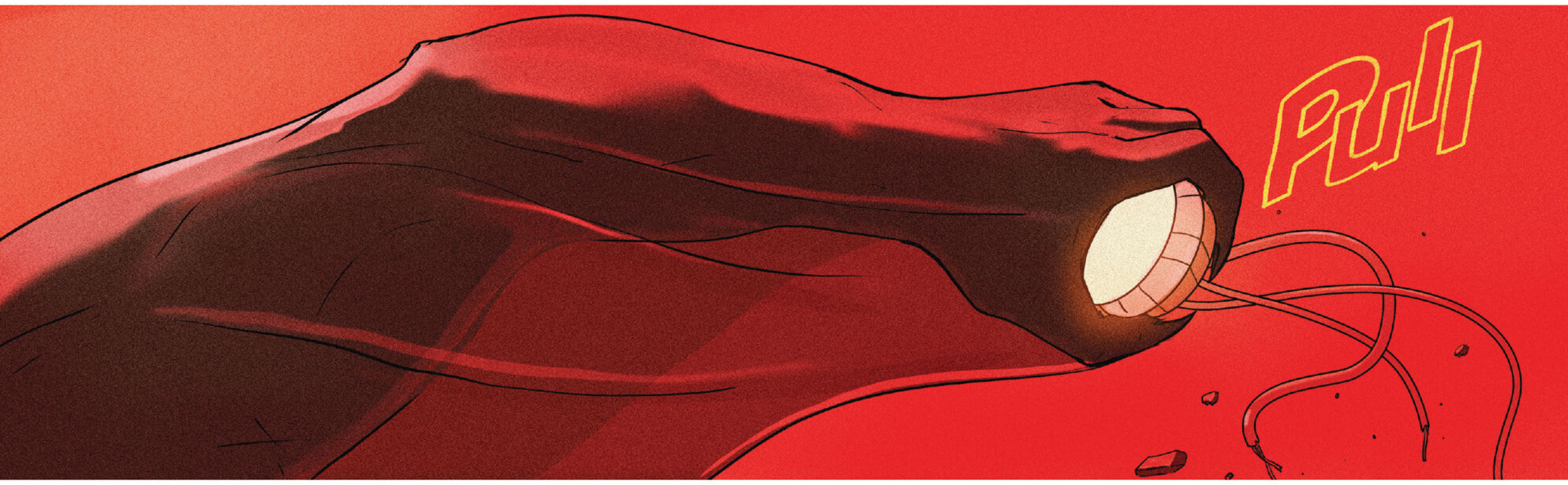
MORE TIMES THAN YOU WOULD IMAGINE, THERE IS A GLITCH, OR I SURVIVE WHAT SHOULD HAVE KILLED ME, AND THE WORLD IS LEFT WITH MULTIPLE **TONY STARKS.** IN NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES, THE WORLD JUST BECAME A BETTER PLACE.
10% MEMORIES SYNCHRONIZED
BUT I HAVE A DIRECT LINE TO THE PRESIDENT, I'M RESPECTED BY THE **U.N.**, I AM ONE OF THE FEW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE HIGHEST **S.H.I.E.L.D.** CLEARANCE AND I HAVE ACCESS TO THE MOST DANGEROUS WEAPONS KNOWN TO HUMANITY.
MULTIPLE **TONY STARKS** ARE A SECURITY HAZARD WAITING TO HAPPEN WHEN THERE ARE **SHAPE-SHIFTERS**, AMONG MANY OTHER THREATS, OUT THERE WHO CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION.
30% MEMORIES SYNCHRONIZED
SO WHEN A **TONY STARK** DISCOVERS THE GLITCH, HE MUST HUNT DOWN AND TERMINATE ALL OTHER **TONY STARKS.**
HOW DO WE KNOW THAT'S NOT THE ***REAL TONY STARK*** LYING DEAD IN THE RAIN?
48% MEMORIES SYNCHRONIZED
I'M THE REAL ONE.
...
73% MEMORIES SYNCHRONIZED
WHY AM I SO SURE?
WELL, BECAUSE I WON.
100% MEMORIES SYNCHRONIZED

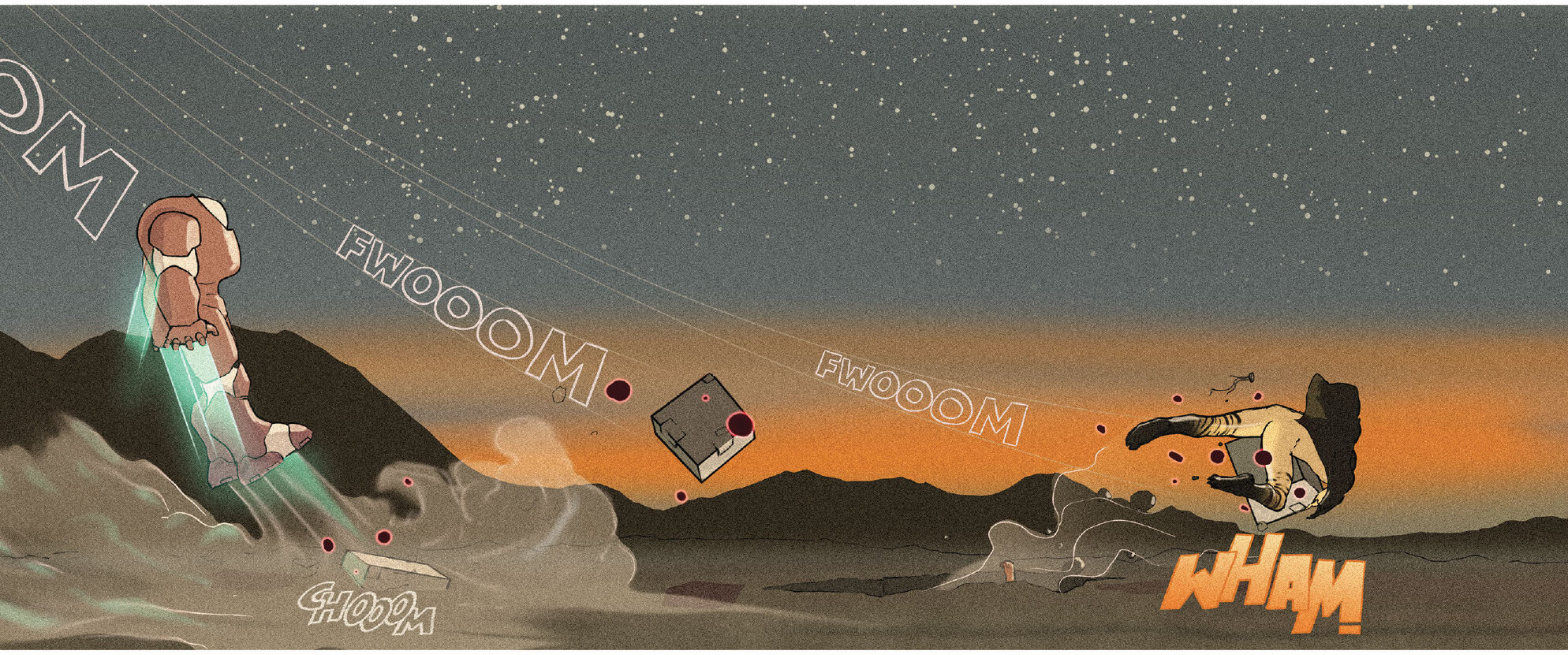
IF I HEAR ONE MORE "HEAD" JOKE WHEN I ASK YOU TO GIVE ME THE CAPSULES...
I SWEAR...
EARTH'S ORBIT.
THREE MONTHS LATER.
...YOU WERE MORE BEARABLE TO BE AROUND WHEN YOU WERE STILL TRYING TO KILL ME.
THAT EXPLAINS A LOT ABOUT YOUR DATING HISTORY.
SAYS THE PERSON WHO ONCE DATED A GUY WHO CALLED HIMSELF "LIZARD LORD."
SHOULD WE BE WORRIED ABOUT WHERE S.H.I.E.L.D. IS GETTING ALL THESE HEADS FROM?
DEPENDS ON YOUR MILEAGE.
THE HEADS BELONG TO A SPECIES OF MOSTLY SOLITARY CREATURES IN THE DRACO GALAXY THAT LIVE EXTREMELY LONG LIVES.
NOT ACCUSTOMED TO DEATH AND GRIEF, WHEN THEY LOSE A LOVED ONE...
"...THEY RELEASE A TEARY BELLOW POWERFUL ENOUGH TO LEVEL CITIES.
"S.H.I.E.L.D. USED TO HUNT THEM TO WEAPONIZE THAT BELLOW."

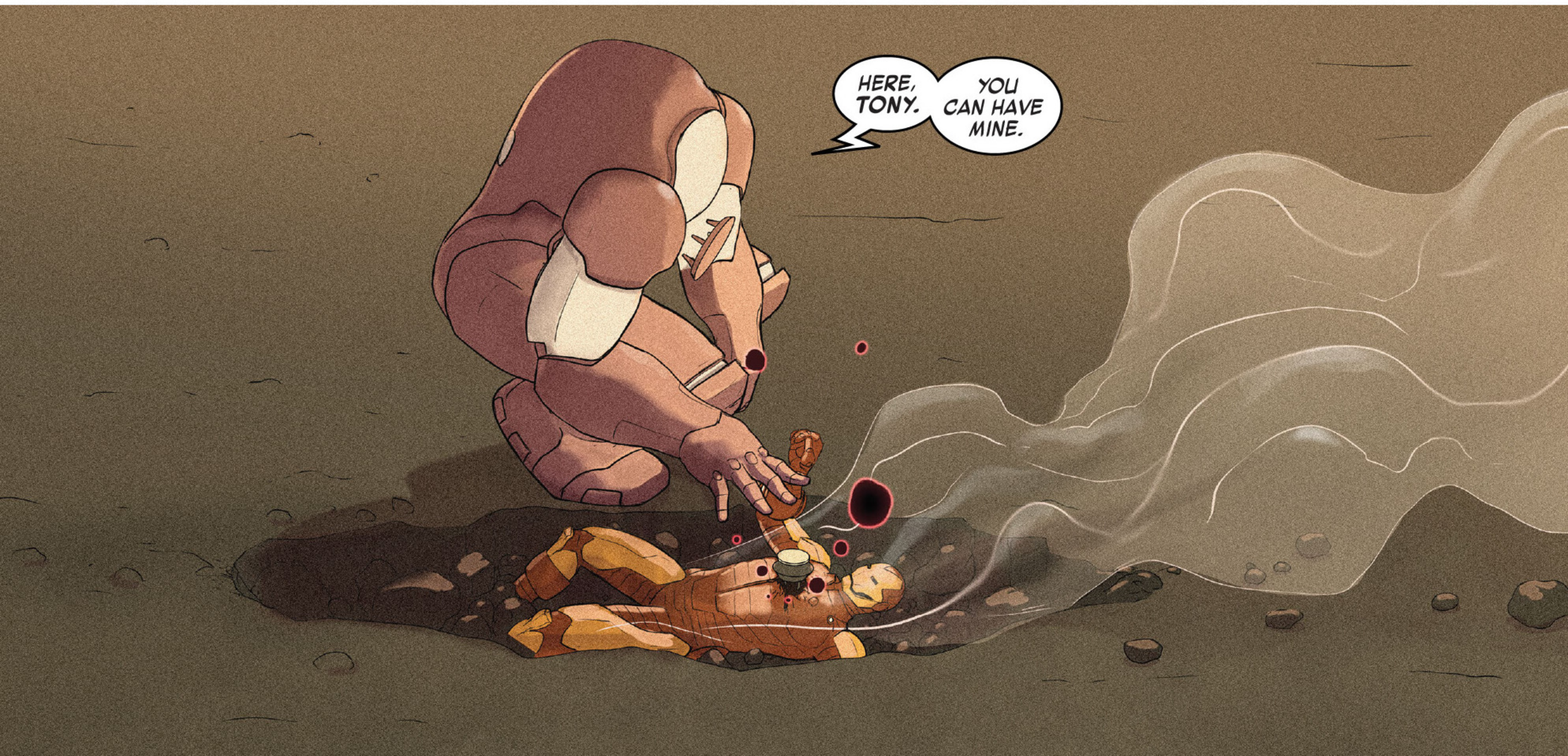
NOW S.H.I.E.L.D. BORROWS MY CLONING TECHNOLOGY TO CREATE AS MANY OF THESE HEADS AS THEY CAN AFFORD.
BEEP BEEP BEEP
THE LIQUID THEY SOAK IN CREATES LOVING MEMORIES IN THEIR BIOSYNTHETIC BRAINS. THE FIRST TIME YOU KISSED A CRUSH KIND OF SWEETNESS.
WHEN THE TRIGGER IS PULLED, THE LIQUID CHANGES TO ONE THAT CREATES THE FEELING OF LOSING THE PERSON THEY SHARED ALL THOSE LOVING MEMORIES WITH.
BEEP
SHUT!
THAT'S SAD.
WHAT'S SAD IS THAT WE CAN CLONE THIS MANY HEADS, BUT CHILDREN STILL DIE WAITING FOR ORGAN DONORS.
WE PRODUCE A FEW LIVERS, KIDNEYS AND HEARTS, BUT MOST OF OUR RESOURCES STILL GO TO FILLING UP THIS CANNON.
KIDNEYS AND HEARTS WON'T MATTER IF THE EARTH IS DESTROYED BY THANOS OR AN ALIEN WARRIOR RACE OF PLANTS.
GOT IT. "DRACO" HEADS BEAT HEADS OF ALIEN CABBAGES.
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN HOLDING ON TO THAT ONE?
IRON MAN. IT'S DIRECTOR HILL. AN UNIDENTIFIED LIFE-FORM IS ACCELERATING TOWARD EARTH AT DANGEROUS SPEEDS.
I SEE IT.
NEED ANY HELP?
NAH.
YOU CAN FINISH UP HERE. AS FOR THAT SMALL FRY...

"...I'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM IN NO TIME."
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
SUDAN.
NOW.
HILL.
IT'S DIRECTOR HILL.
SURE.
LISTEN, THERE IS A HUGE ALIEN SHIP IN RANGE TRANSMITTING ENCRYPTED DATA TOWARD SUDAN--
DON'T KNOW WHAT THE, UH, MILITARY TERM (OR WHATEVER) FOR IT IS. BUT I'M NOT MISTAKEN. IT'S A GIANT SAUCER-SHAPED SPACESHIP.
"ALIEN" SHIP?
WE DON'T HAVE VISUALS, DEOLA.
IT'S CLOAKED, BUT I CAN SENSE IT. THE SHIP IS ALSO SHIELDED, SO I CAN'T TAKE IT APART.
I DON'T LIKE THIS.
I'M LEAVING TO HELP TONY.
Enhanced Gargantus
Claws
Bionic chest plate
Wing membrane
Sonar sensors
Laser sensors
Facial identification
Torque sensors
WHAT IS THAT, LIEUTENANT?
IT'S ONE OF THE VARIOUS BATTLE ARMORS OF THE ONE THEY CALL SPIDER-MAN, CAPTAIN.
DO WE HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT SPIDER-MAN TOO?
WE BROUGHT JUST THE ONE RIIGHA.
NO, CAPTAIN.
IRON MAN IS EARTH'S PROTECTOR. HE IS THE ONE TO DEFEAT.
Stealth Mode Active.
TONY. PLEASE BE OKAY.


AH. THE POWER SOURCE.


PULL


OOM
FWOOOM
FWOOOM
CHOOOM
WHAM!


HERE, TONY.
YOU CAN HAVE MINE.

WOOOM
WHAT'S THE SITCH?
GIVEN TIME, THAT THING'S LIMBS REGROW WHEN CUT. HE DOESN'T BLEED. HE DOESN'T GET TIRED.
BUT FOR SOME REASON, HIS TORSO IS **IMPENETRABLE.** UNLIKE EVERY OTHER PART OF HIM, I'VE NOT BEEN ABLE TO CUT INTO IT.
IT'S PROTECTING HIS "ACHILLES' HEEL."
MY THEORY TOO.
YOU HAVE A PLAN?
I HAVE A PLAN.
WOOOOOOOSH
!

I NEED MORE MASS.
I GOT YOU.
K.A.T.I.E., SUPPRESS ALL ELECTROMAGNETIC AND TECHNOPATHY COUNTER-MEASURES.
SUPPRESSING.
...
INCORPORATING ARMOR AUGMENTATIONS.
ARMOR PRIMED AND READY FOR COMBAT.
YOUR PRIMITIVE TEC--
PULL
UGK!
%BASTARDS! YOU'LL#$BOTH!DIE* FOR/THIS.
YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET INTO HIS TORSO THROUGH THAT.
I FOUND SOMETHING.
NOW, GENTLY--
I SQUISHED IT.
SHOVE
00101 01100001 0111010
1000000 01110011 0110100
1001 01110100 0010000
I'LL BE FINE, DEOLA.
I STILL DON'T REMEMBER FIXING THE CUBE. THAT MEANS THERE'S STILL ANOTHER ME OUT THERE.

TONY.
DEOLA, WE SAW EVERYTHING.
PLEASE STAY CALM.
TONY!!!
DEOLA, STOP! YOU DO NOT HAVE THE CLEARANCE TO FIRE THAT WEAPON.
S.H.I.E.L.D. AND THE AVENGERS ARE ON THEIR WAY!
HIS CONSCIOUSNESS-BACKUP SYSTEM WAS DOWN. THEY KILLED HIM, HILL.
SO DON'T WASTE EVERYTHING HE SACRIFICED TO GET YOU OUT OF PRISON. HE BELIEVED IN YOU, DEOLA. DON'T GET YOURSELF SENT BACK.
I'LL MAKE THEM FEEL MY PAIN.
WHAT IS THAT, LIEUTENANT?
IT APPEARS TO BE A VESSEL, CAPTAIN. WE PICKED UP A LOT OF BIOLOGICAL MATTER FROM IT.
INSIDE, IT LOOKS LIKE A GIANT GUN TO ME, LIEUTENANT.
OH. I SEE THAT NOW, CAPTAIN.

Deola:
>I found something.
>I squished it.

Me:
>I'll be fine, Deola.
>I still don't remember fixing the Cube.

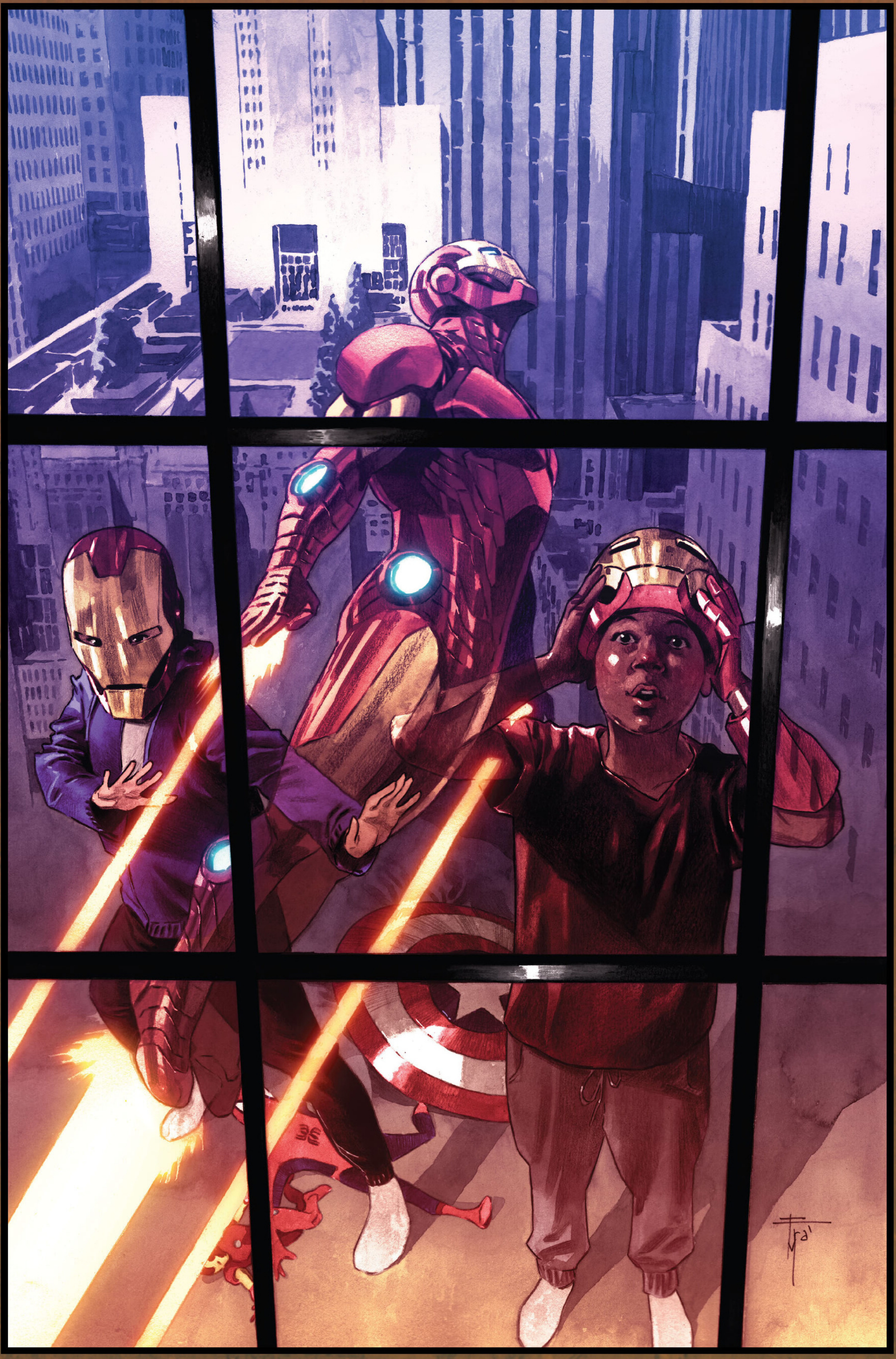
Canuck Club
Captain
TV·RADIO·HI-FI
APPLIANCES

PETE WOODS

#1 VARIANT

VALERIO GIANGIORDANO & CHRIS O'HALLORAN

#2 WAR MACHINE VARIANT



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T+

COLLECTING ***I AM IRON MAN #1-5*** AND MATERIAL FROM
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